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Twenty-Six Historic Ships

The Story of Certain Famous Vessels of War and of their Successors in the Navies of the United States and of the Confederate States of America From 1775 to 1902

By

Frederic Stanhope Hill

Late U. S. Navy

Author of "Twenty Years at Sea," "The Story of the 'Lucky Little Enterprise'" "The Historic Continuity of the Anglican Church," etc.

With an Introduction by

Rear-Admiral George Eugene Belknap, U.S.N., LL.D.
(Retired)

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ADMIRAL DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT, U.S.N.

From a photograph taken in New Orleans in 1862

ADMIRAL [illegible]
From a photograph [illegible]

INSCRIBED

IN RESPECTFUL MEMORY

OF

MY OLD COMMANDER

ADMIRAL DAVID GLASGOW FARRAGUT

UNITED STATES NAVY

WHO IN HIS KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF THE SEAMAN'S ART

IN FERTILITY OF RESOURCE

AND IN SUBLIME AUDACITY IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ENEMY

REPRESENTS THE HIGHEST TYPE OF OFFICER

OUR NAVY HAS YET PRODUCED

PREFACE

THE suggestion that led to the collection of the material for this volume came in the kindly comments of a number of officers of our navy upon a monograph the present writer prepared about a year ago, entitled *The Story of the Lucky Little "Enterprise" and Her Successors in the United States Navy.* These gentlemen remarked that work of a similar character might well be undertaken for other historic ships of our navy.

An attempt to find much new material for such a book in a field already so carefully gleaned was obviously hopeless, but the writer has thought that in treating the career of a score or more of our famous ships separately, and as units, rather than in merging them in a general naval history, as has been the method heretofore, a book might be produced of some value to readers interested in the ships of our navy.

And this can be done the more readily from the fact that almost all our naval history of any importance up to the time of the Civil War, with the exception of the battles on Lakes Erie and Champlain, has been comprised in actions between single ships.

Carlyle says, "There is no heroic poem in the world but is at bottom a biography, the life of a man." To the sailor his ship is not only a sentient being, but is also affectionately classed as of the feminine gender,

and her history may well seem to him a heroic poem. As a sailor, the writer feels that the memoirs of our historic ships may fairly be termed biographies, and as such he has gathered the incidents of their career from various sources, "line upon line, here a little and there a little," from friends and from foes, from English and American, Confederate and Union authorities.

Sketches of some of the Confederate ships of war have been included, as the writer believes a reunited people may well forget, after forty years, the animosities of the Civil War, and recognize the fact that those ships were commanded by American officers trained in our naval service, whose bravery, skill, and endurance, displayed against heavy odds, were part of a common heritage of which we, who mayhap fought against them, are justly proud.

In the preparation of this work I have consulted Cooper's *History of the Navy*, James's *Naval History of Great Britain*, S. Hood's *Letters* (1781), Thomas Clark's *Sketches of the Naval History of the United States* (1813), Waldo's *Life and Character of Stephen Decatur* (1822), Harris's *Life and Services of Commodore William Bainbridge* (1837), Frost's *Pictorial History of the American Navy* (1845), Higgins's *Naval Battles of the United States* (1856), *Life and Battles of Paul Jones Written by Himself* (1830), *Maritime Scraps by a Man-of-War's-Man* (1838), *Biographical Memoir of Commodore Joshua Barney*, by Mary Barney (1832), Emmons's *History of the United States Navy* (1850), J. Butler's *American Bravery in the War of 1812*, J. F. Davis's *Naval Annals*, E. Field's *Biography of Esek Hopkins*, J. Frost's *Book of the Navy*, H. B. Dawson's *Battles of the United States*, J. R. Soley's *Union and Confederate Navies*, the United States Navy Registers,

1813–1902; the London *Naval Chronicle*, Roosevelt's *Naval War of 1812*, Maclay's *History of the United States Navy*, J. H. Brown's *American Naval Heroes*, Morris's *American Navy*, Buell's *Life of Paul Jones*, Hollis's *The Frigate "Constitution," The Original Records of the Union and Confederate Navies*, published by the Navy Department, W. C. Church's *Life of John Ericsson*, and other sources.

I am indebted for much valuable information of a personal nature to several surviving officers of the old navy, who were midshipmen when some of the naval heroes of the War of 1812 were still in the flesh, and I have been greatly aided and encouraged in my labors by Rear-Admiral George Eugene Belknap, U. S. Navy (retired), who has also kindly furnished the very luminous Introduction for this volume.

CAMBRIDGE, October 24, 1902.

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INTRODUCTION

FROM colonial days to this the doings of our men of the sea have been of resplendent character. The demands of earliest colonial life made travel and traffic by water a prime necessity, and the arts of the boat- and ship-builder and kindred industries were perforce among the first pursued and cultivated by our forbears. The enterprises of the sea, indeed, went hand in hand with the conquest of the wilderness, and contributed equally to the building of the nation. Inherited aptitude and the stern conditions of forest-bound life rounded out the picture of sea-promise and gave stirring incentive to maritime pursuit and adventure, and the calling of the sailor became most honorable and important. To the youth of the land it offered a hardy and noble profession, and many eagerly availed themselves of its beckoning opportunities. And when the well-modelled, staunch, and neatly kept craft they sailed began to appear in foreign waters, the folk of the Old World looked upon them with startled eyes coupled with alarm. They at once grasped the pregnant fact that a new race of seamen, strong, resourceful, and resolute, were making ready to dispute the sovereignty of the sea with the foremost of the maritime powers, and they liked the challenge not at all.

In such broadening work New England bore prominent part from the first, and many families of chronicle and influence in New England to-day proudly claim ancestral achievement on lines of commercial or naval effort in colonial and later days. Old sea-chests of camphor wood, or of oak or cedar, in attic and hall, and the china closets or cabinets of many a dame in the land, and especially in seaport towns of New England, speak eloquently in such directions of commercial conquest and maritime splendor—a splendor that reached its zenith in the decade preceding the Civil War,—a decade when nearly every other vessel met on the ocean bore our flag at the peak,—a period when our merchantmen, dotting every sea and seen in every clime, were known at a glance by the beauty of their hulls, the trimness of their spars, and the whiteness of their sails of cotton duck.

But the colonial age that started such growth and development—an age that comprised the greater part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—was one of great unrest, racial ambition, and daring enterprise. England, France, and Spain were all striving for supremacy on this continent, and either active or quasi-wars existed on the ocean between those powers during that time.

Beside their regularly commissioned cruisers, privateersmen under their respective flags and the dreaded craft of the buccaneers swarmed the Atlantic from the shores of Newfoundland to the Spanish Main, and every vessel that put to sea from the colonies, whether fisherman, trader, or whaler, went armed to the teeth. And so it came about that the seamen of the colonial merchantmen were of necessity bred to the use of the gun and swivel, cutlass and pistol, boarding-pike and

battle-axe, as though trained on board ships-of-war. Hence they made skilled and experienced crews for the armed ships of the colonies that sometimes added to the strength of the King's fleet in the wars with France for the possession of Canada, notably at the first siege of Louisburg, in 1745, where our New England folk had the superior force in numbers of ships and guns.

It was not strange then that, when fate and destiny called upon the colonies to break away from the rule of the mother country and establish a government solely of their own, the seamen so trained and schooled in sea-warfare should at once become a splendid nucleus for the creation of a national navy, as well as the potent source of that important adjunct of the navy of that day—the depredating privateer. Nor was it surprising that from the beginning of hostilities, whether in privately organized expeditions, letters of marque, or ships-of-war, they did brilliant and telling work from their first encounters with the enemy to the last, thus laying the strong foundations of that noble service which all through our national life has given so many lustrous pages to our history—a service which in every period of demand since its birth has proved itself worthy of its valorous descent.

And fortunate it was for the beginnings of that service that when the Revolutionary struggle had so far progressed as to make retreat on the part of the colonies impossible, men of the sturdy good sense and prescient vision of John Adams and Benjamin Franklin took in at once the great advantage that must accrue to the patriot cause in the putting afloat of a navy and a privateering service to seek and attack the enemy at his most vulnerable point—his transports and merchant ships on the high seas—and who brought the

weight of their standing and influence to bear upon the Continental Congress toward the adoption of such policy.

Equally fortunate was it, too, when the creation of a navy was becoming a question of vital concern to the country, that Paul Jones, the masterly seaman and consummate naval commander of the Revolution, was at hand to lay before the Marine Committee of Congress his luminous letters embodying his views as to the material and personnel of a navy—letters so strong and forceful, so illuminating and instructive, that the one pertaining to personnel may well stand for all time, and might with profit be printed in letters of gold and hung up in the halls of the Navy Department as well as in the cabins and wardrooms of our ships-of-war of to-day, as an informing outline of the broadly grounded education, thorough self-control, and sound judgment, coupled with instant readiness of decision and action, that an officer of the navy worthy to bear the high trust imposed upon him should possess.

Nor may we forget that one of the first things Washington did after assuming command at Cambridge, little more than a fortnight after Bunker Hill, was the fitting out of several privateers, officered and manned by New England sailors he found in camp.

Among the officers so commissioned was Captain John Manley, a notable fisherman of Marblehead. Selecting a choice crew in camp for his vessel, he soon captured three British ships in Boston Bay. One of them, laden with heavy guns, mortars, and entrenching tools, made a cargo especially welcome to the scantily provided forces beleaguering Boston. Meanwhile, other hastily equipped privateers sallied forth from different ports along the coast in quest of the enemy's ships.

The result was the speedy capture of several transports laden with munitions of war intended for the royal forces, but which were thus happily diverted to Washington's headquarters.

Yet the Congress hesitated some time before it would sanction a general scheme of privateering or provide and maintain a navy, but when the cruisers of the Crown began to harass and burn our coast towns and seize our merchantmen wherever found, all scruples vanished, and letters of marque were not only granted by the score, but in December, 1775, the building of thirteen ships-of-war, one to stand for each colony, was voted; five of thirty-two guns, five of twenty-eight guns, and three of twenty-four guns, to be completed the following April. The immediate purchase of ten merchant vessels, suitable for conversion into cruisers, was also authorized. The names of some of the ships so built or purchased continue on our navy list to-day. The captains appointed by Congress to command those ships, or some of them, ordered built, were Esek Hopkins, Commander-in-Chief, with rank of Admiral; Dudley Saltonstall, Abram Whipple, Nicholas Biddle, and John Burroughs Hopkins.

That fine old seaman, John Barry, had been commissioned as captain ten days before by General Washington, Commander-in-Chief of both the sea and land forces, up to that time. By some Barry has been styled the Father of the Navy, but really, if such fatherhood is to be bestowed upon any person, then to John Adams must be given that honor, for he was the man of all others in Congress, not excepting Franklin, who best comprehended what seamen could do in the way of distressing the shipping of the enemy, and who pushed through that body the act establishing the navy

of the Revolution, that acquitted itself so well when the fate of the colonies depended so much upon its intrepid doing.

Barry did very notable and varied work all through the war, and in time became the senior officer of the service. He was a blunt, plain-spoken, and irascible man, as the following anecdote will show:

While lying, on one occasion, in the Delaware in command of the *Effingham*, he received orders from the Navy Board to sink her on some flats in the river where she could be raised again, General Washington fearing the British would send an expedition up the river and destroy her and her consorts. Barry protested and said he could readily defend his ship. "But," said Mr. Hopkinson of the Navy Board, "I would take General Washington's opinion sooner than I would yours, Captain Barry." "No doubt you would," retorted stout old Barry, "but, nevertheless, I know more about a ship than General Washington and the whole Navy Board put together, and that they order my ship sunk, unless by direction of the Marine Committee of Congress, I protest against it." The upshot was that Barry was brought before the Navy Board on charges preferred by Hopkinson. As Barry, however, proved that Hopkinson's language and bearing had been equally indiscreet and combative with his own, he was spared dismissal from the service.

Among the first lieutenants commissioned with the captains, December, 1775, was Paul Jones. Although Jones had already shown qualities of brilliant order as a sea officer and had so unmistakably impressed his ideas as to the composition and organization of a navy upon Congress, he was denied a captaincy at that juncture through the jealousy that existed then as now in

political and seamen circles. But his genius for naval command could neither be gainsaid nor suppressed, and soon, through his rugged force, indomitable will, unsurpassed daring, and marvellous power over men, he rose superior to all his fellows. His deeds in the *Ranger* and *Bon Homme Richard* in British waters enchant the mind as do the witching stories of Robin Hood, and the glory of them will live in the hearts of our people as long as the nation exists; nor will the memory of them ever fade from the British mind.

Denounced at the time by the British government as a pirate, we know that a price was set upon his head, although he bore the commission of the Continental Congress, as did Washington and other officers; but, to-day, when the struggling colonies of George III.'s time have grown into a mighty nation and the wounds of separation have become in a great measure healed, high British authority tells us that "Jones was falsely called a pirate; that he was not a pirate in any true sense of the word, but a privateer employed by the colonies in the revolt against the mother country." Now, rejecting the designation of privateer, we may well pardon it when a staunch Britisher like Admiral Lord Charles Beresford of this day tells his fellow-countrymen that "No one now can think the colonists were wrong in fighting the War of Independence under the circumstances forced upon them. In fact, they would not have been worthy descendants of Britain had they not done so."

It seems strange to us, indeed, in this day, that George III. and his advisers so underrated the spirit and pluck of the King's trans-Atlantic subjects as to believe that they would not fight for their rights, either on land or sea, whatever the provocation; a mistake

that, largely owing to the splendid work of the seamen of the colonies, was to cost England the brightest jewel in her crown. They were to learn, indeed, that the men of Devon who sailed with Drake and Hawkins and other stout captains of Elizabeth's day were no hardier nor better skilled, nor of more heroic mould than the seamen of Portsmouth and Salem, Marblehead and Gloucester, of Cape Cod, Bristol, and Long Island Sound, New York, the Chesapeake, and the Carolinas in colonial and Revolutionary days.

What our seamen accomplished, indeed, in the Revolution has never been stated better than by Senator Hoar in a debate in the national Senate a few months ago. Said he:

> Our independence in the Revolution was won on the sea. What compelled Lord North and the unwilling monarch to make peace was the rate of insurance on English commerce. It was not the French alliance. It was not the French troops under Rochambeau. It was the New England sailors and the other maritime States who won our independence. The rates of insurance in the Mediterranean on British vessels before the French alliance went up to twenty-eight per cent. But what was it that brought those rates up to twenty-eight per cent.? It was Paul Jones, Abram Whipple, and men like them, and hundreds of naval commanders as privateers or in our little navy, who had inspired such terror at sea by their valor that British commerce could not live any longer.

And we may add that Jones, leading all his contemporary captains in the character and importance of his achievements, stood for the sea as Washington stood for the land in the fateful days of the Revolutionary struggle. Nor may we forget that in every year after

the Declaration of Independence we had at sea in our cruisers and letters of marque from forty thousand to fifty thousand men against the enemy, or more men than Washington ever had at any one time under his command as Continentals, French contingent, and militia; and, further, that the sixteen thousand British seamen captured on the high seas was only six thousand less than the total number of the enemy who surrendered to the armies of Washington and his generals as the result of their campaigns in all parts of the land.

But of this work of Jones and his distinguished compeers of the Revolution, as well as that of the succeeding generations of naval men, the author of this volume, Captain Frederic Stanhope Hill, veteran seaman and journalist, and of gallant record as an officer of the navy during our Civil War under the eye of Farragut, will more fully tell. He has not purposed, however, to tell the story of all the ships of historic note and interest that illumine our naval annals from Revolutionary days to this, but has selected from their number for his inspiring theme twenty-six ships of varied types and daring, including five ships of the Confederate States navy.

Beginning with the period of the Revolution, he first takes up for illustration the records of the cruising and the work accomplished by what may be called the Paul Jones group of ships—the *Alfred*, the *Reprisal*, *Ranger*, and *Bon Homme Richard*. Of these, the *Reprisal* was the first to arrive in European waters and enter upon the work of harassing British commerce wherever met. She was also memorable as having escaped the British cruisers in crossing the Atlantic and conveying in safety to the port of Nantes, Benjamin Franklin, our first Minister to the French Court. The

other three were ineffaceably connected with the name and exploits of Jones, for it was on their decks that he won the prime glories that attach to his name, glories won, not under present conditions of steam and long-range ordnance, but under the more strenuous conditions of the sail and smooth-bore-gun period:

When sails alone bedecked the main—
  Brave days of oak and shroud and spar,
When winds of heaven made sweet refrain,
  And Ocean's breast, both near and far,
Bore men of stout, true, sailor brood,
Within staunch hulls of native wood.

When face to face and hand to hand—
  When boarders' blades were flashing;
When bloody pikes made desperate stand,
  And pistol balls were crashing—
And men fought men as brave men should
To keep their walls of native wood.

Now, passing on to the quasi-naval war with France in 1798–99, in which France was worsted, to the wars with the Barbary Powers of Northern Africa, waged a few years later to the great discomfiture of those barbarians; and to the War of 1812–14 with England, Captain Hill has selected among the participating vessels to be considered, the *Wasp*, *Hornet*, *Enterprise*, *Constitution*, *Constellation*, *United States*, *Essex*, *Lawrence*, and *Saratoga*.

In the first war with the corsairs of the Mediterranean, in which Preble, Decatur, Bainbridge, Sterrett, John Rodgers, and others of our valiant captains had given those pirates grim lessons in international comity at the cannon's mouth that up to that time no Euro-

pean fleet had attempted, British naval men had looked on and seen that our ships had been well handled and bravely fought, but they flouted the idea that our ships-of-war could hope to meet theirs in battle with any hope of success, whatever the odds. Back of them, in letters of blood, stood a long and brilliant record of resplendent achievement that had no equal among the nations. Frenchmen and Spaniards alike had been swept off the sea by their valorous might, and dared not question Britain's supremacy on the sea, and so the conquering Britons, forgetting the disasters they had sustained at the hands of our cruisers and privateers in Revolutionary days, said, as the War of 1812 drew nigh: "Can Yankee seamen think to meet the ships of the Royal Navy on the high seas with hostile intent and not go down in defeat at the first test of battle? Vain thought! 'T was simply absurd!" And, voicing such feeling, Captain Carden of the *Macedonian*, who was fated to lose his ship in his first encounter with his American foe, said to his destined captor one day at Norfolk, Va., just before the outbreak of the war: "Decatur, though your ship may be good enough and you are a clever set of fellows, what practice have you had in war? There is the rub!"

But our captains, their officers and men, who in their cruisings had met many of the British ships in different parts of the world, and knew their officers and crews in the heartsome way of the sea, and especially in the congenial way in which British and American men-of-war's men have generally come together, felt that ship for ship the chances in the game of war would be equal, and they contemplated possible hostile encounters with any foe, whether British or other, without misgivings as to results. Nor was their confidence overstrained as

their work in many regions of ocean attested when called upon to make good their faith.

But not alone had Britons misjudged the skill, the versatility, and might of our seamen, for when the war seemed imminent that was to bring to the navy a prestige for enterprise, valor, and accomplishment that it has never lost, President Madison and his advisers had so little faith in the navy, weak in ships as it was in contrast with the overwhelming strength of the British marine, that they proposed to lay its ships up in port out of all harm's way. In other words, a war that was to be waged in the interests of the freedom of the seas and sailors' rights, and as a thunderous protest against the impressment of our seamen by British cruisers, was to go on, and the class of our citizens specially sought to be protected and most concerned in the vigorous prosecution of the war were to be denied all participation, and particularly of the opportunity of striking the enemy on his and their own chosen element.

Happily for the country, Commodores Stewart and Bainbridge prevailed upon the President to let the men of the sea have a chance, assuring him that the navy would take good care of itself if but allowed the opportunity. Their arguments were so forceful that the President was won over to their thinking and gave his consent. All the world knows the sequel, and none better than our kinsfolk over whom our sea victories were won at that period. How scant in inspiration, indeed, would our war annals of that time appear to us to-day were the doings of the navy to be blotted from them! In eighteen engagements the Royal Navy had sustained fifteen defeats, and the London *Times* and other English journals teemed with articles of chagrin and bewilderment, and of censure of their own officers

and of their Admiralty administration; while the naval historian—the unreliable James—was so violent in his narrative that, referring to a frontispiece to a history of the war published in Boston, 1816, and bearing on the design the names of Manley, Truxton, Paul Jones, Preble, Hull, Decatur, Bainbridge, Stewart, Lawrence, Perry, Macdonough, Biddle, Porter, Blakely, and other of our captains, he says: "No one except an American will consider inapplicable to the design the following words of Mr. Addison, 'One kind of burlesque represents mean persons in the accoutrements of heroes.'" And, continuing in such vein, James adds:

> Previously to the late war with the United States, persons in this country were in the habit of exclaiming against "French boasting," "French misrepresentation," and "French impudence." My analysis of the American accounts has, I trust, shown that in the art of boasting and misrepresenting, the French could never compete with the Americans,

and more of like amiable effect.

On the other hand, while it was admitted that our ships were often the superior in tonnage, number of guns, and complement to the British ships, it was seen that the better gunnery of the Americans was the deciding factor in their favor.

Such fact was frankly recognized by Sir Howard Douglas, an eminent British authority on naval gunnery in his day; and as to the character and alertness of our officers, Admiral Sir Charles Napier, in writing a friend from Bermuda in 1813, said:

> Two packets are quite due and we fear they have been taken, for the Yankees swarm here, and when a frigate

goes out to drive them away they take her. Yankees fight well and are gentlemen in their mode of warfare. Decatur refused Carden's sword, saying, "You have used it so well, I should be ashamed to take it from you." These Yankees so much abused are really fine fellows.

Again, in writing to Lord Melville in 1817, he said:

The moment the American war broke out, we had to fight a navy better disciplined than our own, and we were defeated by superior force, it is true; but be it remembered, we were most severely punished without inflicting any great injury on our opponents.

A Halifax paper also said mournfully: "A vessel moored for a target could not have been sunk sooner than the *Peacock* by the *Hornet*. It will not do for British vessels to fight them single-handed. The Americans are a dead nip."

The one single-frigate action of the war where the English were successful was the capture by the *Shannon* of the ill-omened, ever-unlucky, ill-prepared ship that sailors ever shunned — the ill-fated *Chesapeake*, in the most unequal of the naval meetings of the war.

It is a moderate statement to say that the chances in favor of the British ship were, at the outset, at least as seven to one; and certain it is that no event in the British navy ever caused more genuine exultation in the British mind than the news of the *Shannon's* victory, breaking as it did the seeming spell of Yankee invincibility on the ocean. King, Parliament, and the city of London vied with one another in the bestowal of honors upon the exultant victor, Captain Broke, and he deserved all the honors he got; for not relying inertly on what his predecessors had done for the glory of the

British flag, he addressed himself to the ever-advancing conditions of naval warfare, with the resolve to be the complete master of his profession in every direction, and to keep the ships he commanded up to the highest state of efficiency. In this instance, his officers and men had been under his continuous command for six or seven years, and through his tireless efforts and masterful direction they had made the *Shannon* the most efficient in drill, discipline, and well-directed gun-fire of any British frigate of her day.

On the other hand, the *Chesapeake*, manned largely by a raw, a motley, and semi-mutinous crew, gathered on board at the last moment, was in no condition whatever of stationing, drill, and discipline to go out and meet and fight an experienced, thoroughly-in-hand crew like that of the English ship. Lawrence, indeed, who had commanded the *Chesapeake* but a brief time, was warned by his brother officers in Boston not to go out under such unpromising conditions and seek battle with the ship known to be lying outside in wait for him; but beside having urgent orders from Washington to proceed to sea, he had captured the *Peacock* with such ease that he committed the inexcusable mistake of underrating his antagonist, just as some of the British captains had done during the war, to their own certain discredit and defeat.

But while our ships suffered defeat, we know that Lawrence threw away in the most unaccountable manner the chance of raking the *Shannon* as he bore down to attack her, and that his mortal wounding early in the fight was an irretrievable blow that contributed materially to the victory gained by the enemy.

Of that famous sea duel, President Roosevelt, in his *Naval History of the War*, recently rewritten to form

chapter xli., vol. vi., of *The History of the Royal Navy, from the Earliest Times to the Present*, and edited by William Laird Clowes, says:

> When the *Chesapeake* surrendered, her crew had suffered a much heavier relative loss than the crews of the *Guerrière*, the *Macedonian*, or even the *Java*. The *Shannon* had not only suffered a heavier loss than befell the victorious ship in any other ship duel of the war, but had also suffered a loss as severe as that which had been held to justify the surrender of more than one vessel—the *Argus* and *Epervier*, for instance, and even the *Guerriére*.
>
> There was no lack of courage on the defeated side; the heavy death roll shows that. Nearly every American officer was killed or wounded and so were three fourths of the marines, and half the veterans of the crew.

And of the honors showered upon Broke the distinguished writer says: "No other British captain has ever won such honors by a single ship action. No other fight between frigates has ever been so enthusiastically commemorated by the victor's countrymen."

Of such fact we may be well content, for the greater the recognition given Broke for his brilliant achievement the greater the tribute paid to the valor of his defeated foe.

Nevertheless, it was a stunning blow to our hitherto victorious seamen, but under the marked conditions of the fight, no other result could have been reasonably expected, whatever Lawrence may have thought. Yet hardly had the echoes of the Tower's exultant guns died away and the ink on the parchment certifying Broke's knighthood dried, when other victories of our flag on the sea came to check the swelling tide of Britain's rejoicing, and restore the confidence of our people.

It is told that some years after the war a British naval officer, dining at the Duke of Wellington's table, indulged in extravagant laudations of Broke's victory, and of highly depreciating comments on the naval victories of the Americans over their flag. One of the guests, Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin, who, despite his position in the royal navy, could not forget his native soil for he was born in Boston in 1759, after listening with growing impatience to such flippant talk, finally broke in with the remark: "It was a lucky thing for your friend Broke that he fell in with the unprepared *Chesapeake*, and not with Hull and the *Constitution*. If he had, it is quite possible no Tower guns would have been heard celebrating the *Shannon's* victory!"

Of the President's luminous chapter contributed to Clowes's history, Mr. Clowes says in a personal letter to Admiral Luce of our navy: "I consider Mr. Roosevelt's chapter to be the best part of it—the sixth volume—and to be, moreover, a monument of fair statement and wise reasoning."

Such appreciation is gratifying, and we may add that the President's story of the war is generally regarded as the most reliable history of that conflict that has, as yet, been laid before the public. It is certainly fair and generous towards our British friends in the contentions that have arisen between them and ourselves as to matters of fact and happening, and his countrymen may well applaud what he has said in his candid, fearless way, whether of praise where due or of blame where demanded.

Coming down now to the period of our Civil War, that convulsed the land by its titanic throes from 1861 to 1865, our author takes up as the subjects of his illustrative pen the records of the doings of the *Hartford*

and *New Ironsides*, *Monitor* and *Kearsarge*, of the Union ships; and of the *Sumter* and *Alabama*, *Merrimac*, *Arkansas*, and *Tennessee* of the Confederate ships.

Of this part of his book it may be readily surmised that Captain Hill, having himself been an active participant in many of the operations afloat during the fateful years of the Rebellion, insensibly throws something of his own personality into the narrative, thus making it the more graphic and interesting.

And let it be said here that, strange as it may seem, the great bulk of our people have never fully comprehended the potent part the navy took towards saving the Union from disintegration a generation and more ago; but it is no exaggeration to say that had it not been for the splendid co-operation of the navy and marine corps with the Union armies in the field, there would never have been any surrender at Appomattox. The first blows most keenly felt by the Confederacy were struck by the navy. Closely on the heels of disastrous Bull Run came the inspiriting intelligence of Admiral Stringham's capture of the forts at Hatteras Inlet. A little later, when the entire North was cast down by the terrible disaster at Ball's Bluff, the loyal heart was again uplifted in thanksgiving and restored confidence by Du Pont's grand victory at Hilton Head. Foote's capture of Fort Henry preluded Grant's victory at Donelson. At Shiloh the gunboats materially assisted on the flank, and Farragut's unparalleled victory at the passage of the lower Mississippi forts and the capture of New Orleans cut the Confederacy in twain, and marked the beginning of the end. Wellington might have lost Waterloo and England would scarce have felt the shock, but had Nelson failed at Trafalgar, the blow to British supremacy on the sea would have

been well-nigh irreparable. So, too, the United States could stand the repeated disasters that befell the Army of the Potomac; but had Farragut, the ablest naval commander since Nelson's time, been repulsed at Forts Jackson and St. Philip, and driven back, baffled and crippled to the Gulf, it would have been an almost fatal blow to the Union cause as, indeed, the victory of the Union fleet was a stroke to the Confederacy from which it never recovered. Nor must we forget the Providential appearance in Hampton Roads of Worden in the *Monitor* on the evening of the 8th of March, 1862, on the heels of the disastrous blows inflicted by the *Merrimac* on that day, and the substantial victory gained the next day over that rebel terror that had sent consternation throughout the land and threatened McClellan's communications on the Peninsula.

The guns of the navy not only captured and turned over to the land forces almost every important point along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, as well as on the James and Potomac and the majestic Mississippi and its tributaries, but it stood in its potent co-operation as the protecting force to the army at all points where a gunboat could float. Wherefore, while the country glories in Donelson, Shiloh, and Missionary Ridge; Malvern Hill, Antietam, and Gettysburg; the Wilderness, Franklin, and Five Forks; the march to the sea, the capture of Atlanta and Savannah, and much other grand work of the army, it will not do to forget Hatteras Inlet; the circling fight at Hilton Head; the brilliant passage of Forts St. Philip and Jackson, and the capture of New Orleans; the incomparable battle of Mobile Bay; the river fights at Forts Henry, Donelson, and Arkansas Post, Port Hudson, Vicksburg, and Island No. 10; the destruction of the insurgent fleet at Memphis; the

sweeping of the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers; the fateful combat with the *Merrimac* in Hampton water; the fight of the double-enders with the ironclad *Albemarle*, and the subsequent destruction of that vessel by the heroic Cushing; the battles of Roanoke Island, Plymouth, and Newbern in the sounds of the Carolinas and Georgia; the work of the *New Ironsides* and monitors at the siege of Charleston and at Fort Fisher; the destruction of the *Alabama*, and other notable things done, beside the maintenance of the effective and strangling blockade from the Chesapeake to the Rio Grande, which Professor Scharf, the able and fair-minded historian of the Confederate Navy, justly says, "shut the Confederacy out from the world, deprived it of its supplies, weakened its military resources and naval strength, and compelled exhaustion by requiring the consumption of everything grown or raised in the country."

In short, had it not been for the work of the navy, the power of the Confederacy would never have been broken. Had the Confederates, indeed, been able to export their products freely and to import supplies, recruits, and munitions of war at their will, they would have held their ground; the Confederacy would have become a fixed fact. Hugh McCulloch, in his *Memoirs of Men and Measures of Half a Century*, affirms such a view in a most emphatic way, nor is there a naval or military man in Europe of any reputation as seaman or soldier who does not hold to like opinion.

But in this view let us not forget to give fitting recognition of the high qualities and professional skill of the officers who commanded and officered the Confederate ships, for they were among the ablest officers of the mother service when they resigned their commissions

to link their fortunes with the Southern cause. They were Americans then—they are Americans now. As foemen they were worthy of any man's steel, and as friends they were and are strong and true; and it is a well-cherished memory of war days that there were but few instances of personal bitterness between the men so sternly divided during the tragic years of 1861–65. As enemies-at-arms the Confederates did many brilliant things; but their cause, happily for them and for us, was not to prevail.

Now, touching upon the ships of the recent war with Spain, whose stories of doing our author selects for the concluding chapters of his volume, it seems hardly necessary to say that the navy carried off the prime honors of that conflict.

Yet, despite the resplendent work the navy had always done in the demanding past, did the country in its measure of the service and its estimate of its prowess, feel that such would be the outcome? By no means! Said a prominent merchant of Boston to me one day after the destruction of Cervera's fleet:

> A few months ago we did not think much of the navy; we had seen its white ships come and go, and while they seemed to make a pretty and costly show, we did not believe they would amount to much in time of need against an enemy; now we know better, and what the navy wants hereafter, within reason, it can always get—that is, so far as we business men have voice and influence.

So, too, when it became evident that war was inevitable, a distinguished Western Senator, now dead, in writing a friend from Washington, said: "We are quite ready for war in every direction except, perhaps, as regards the navy. That branch of the service, under

the new conditions of construction, gun and torpedo, is as yet untried, and I have my doubts as to the outcome." What need to tell how quickly Dewey removed the Senator's doubts? Receiving orders on the 26th of April, 1898, to proceed from Chinese waters and capture or destroy the Spanish fleet, the ships of that fleet lay, five days later, burning or beached in Manila Bay as the result of the uniquest battle, in some respects, in naval experience.

We readily recall the suspense of the country immediately following the declaration of war, and how apprehensive many seaboard folk were that the cruisers of the enemy would suddenly appear and swoop upon the coast, bombarding or burning every town or city within reach of their guns; nor may we forget the thrills of relief and acclaim that swelled all hearts when the tidings of that sweeping victory in Manila Bay were flashed throughout the land. Who can ever forget that day, or fail to forget that Dewey's celerity of movement and every incident pertaining to the battle and its outcome seemed more like romance than cold, hard fact?

Spain's sea-power in the Pacific had been swept away as the result of that brief morning's work, and it only remained to deal in like manner with the Spanish power in the Atlantic to reach a point where the stress of the war would be over.

Nor did the country have to wait long for such consummation, for two months later, Cervera's ships were destroyed by the ships of Sampson's fleet off Santiago in a battle of great dramatic interest and swift despatch.

The results of those fights, indeed, gave our navy the prestige, in some respects, of two of the most remarkable battles in naval annals; battles which profoundly impressed all the nations of the earth, and taught a

lesson of American prowess on the sea that will never be forgotten.

The navy is, indeed, the sheet anchor of our national defence. Valiant in war, it is never idle in peace. It is the loving handmaid of commerce, following the merchant, the traveller, and missionary into all seas and climes with its strong, protecting arm. We know that the surest preventive of war is preparation to meet its dire demands when forced upon us, and while it has always been the object of our naval men to keep our ships and guns and personnel up to the highest state of efficiency, it has also been their aim and ambition to devote their exceptional opportunities in furtherance of the benign and uplifting conditions of peace.

GEO. E. BELKNAP.

BOSTON, *Nov. 15th, 1902.*

TWENTY-SIX HISTORIC SHIPS

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN NAVY

IMMEDIATELY after the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill it became evident to the Continentals that to carry on the war successfully against England they must obtain clothing, arms, and ammunition for their army, and, above all, powder, of which their supply was very limited. As the British were receiving their munitions of war from England, it was shrewdly decided to intercept these store-ships of the enemy to obtain immediate supplies for Washington's army, then encamped at Cambridge.

On the 13th of November, 1775, Massachusetts issued letters of marque and reprisal against ships infesting the seacoast of America, and instituted courts of admiralty to condemn any prizes brought into port by these armed ships. General Washington, as Commander-in-Chief, commissioned John Manley, commanding the Massachusetts State cruiser *Lee*, to cruise in the vicinity of Boston for the purpose of intercepting supplies for the British army; and on November 29, 1775, the *Lee* came into Cape Ann Roads with the

prize *Nancy*, laden with 2000 muskets and bayonets, 8000 fuses, 31 tons of musket shot, 3000 12-pound shot, a 13-inch mortar, two 6-pounders, several barrels of powder, and 50 carcasses or frames for combustibles to set buildings on fire. On December 8th, Captain Manley captured three more transports, and narrowly escaped being taken himself by the cruiser *Falcon*. In the following spring the *Franklin*, commanded by James Mugford, captured the *Hope* and brought her safely into port, with 1500 barrels of powder and a great quantity of intrenching tools, which were invaluable to General Washington in his siege of Boston.

The number of British vessels bound for Boston captured by these first letters of marque, from November 13, 1775, to March 17, 1776, when the British evacuated Boston, amounted to thirty-one; their aggregate tonnage was 3645 tons.

The first suggestion for the establishment of a national American navy is to be found in a resolution of instructions to the Rhode Island delegates to the Continental Congress, passed on August 26, 1775. One clause of these instructions, which were presented in Congress, October 3, 1775, reads:

> And as every principle, divine and human, require us to obey that great and fundamental law of nature, self-preservation, until peace shall be restored upon constitutional principles; this colony will most heartily exert the whole power of government, in conjunction with the other colonies, for carrying on this just and necessary war, and bringing the same to a happy issue.
>
> And among other measures for obtaining this most desirable purpose, this Assembly is persuaded, that the building and equipping an American fleet as soon as possible

would greatly and essentially conduce to the preservation of the lives, liberty, and property of these colonies, and therefore instruct their delegates to use their whole influence, at the ensuing Congress, for building, at the Continental expense, a fleet of sufficient force for the protection of these colonies, and for employing them in such manner and places as will most effectually annoy our enemies and contribute to the common defence of these colonies.

These resolutions were referred to the following Friday, and made the special order of the day, and were then again referred to the seventh day of October, when they occasioned a most spirited debate. Samuel Chase, of Maryland, declared: "It is the maddest idea in the world to think of building an American fleet. Its latitude is wonderful, we should mortgage the whole continent!" After exhausting these flights of fancy, he added, "but I believe we should build two swift sailing vessels." What would Mr. Chase have thought if he could have looked forward one hundred and twenty-five years to a Congress of the United States calmly passing an appropriation bill that carried seventy-eight million dollars for the use of the navy department during a single year?

Christopher Gadsden, of South Carolina, was also inclined to be cautious in regard to the Rhode Island plan, but he "believed it was absolutely necessary that some plan of defence by sea should be adopted." Gadsden's colleague, John Rutledge, wishing to know how many ships were to be built and what they would cost, offered a resolution for the appointment of a committee to furnish such estimates. This was seconded by Rev. Dr. Zolby, of Georgia, who added, "Rhode Island has taken the lead: I move that the delegates of Rhode Island prepare a plan giving us their opinion."

This was followed by "light skirmishing," as John Adams terms it, in his diary; but on October 13, 1775, it was

Resolved, That a swift sailing vessel to carry ten carriage guns and a proportionable number of swivels, with eighty men, be fitted, with all possible despatch, for a cruise of three months, and that the commander be instructed to cruise eastward for intercepting such transports as may be laden with warlike stores and other supplies for our enemies, and for such other purposes as the Congress shall direct.

Also:

That a committee of three be appointed to prepare an estimate of the expense, and lay the same before the Congress and to contract with proper persons to fit out the vessel.

Resolved, That another vessel be fitted out for the same purposes, and that the said committee report their opinion of a proper vessel and also an estimate of the expense.

The members chosen for this committee, which, as later enlarged, was known as the Marine Committee, and sometimes as the Naval Committee, were Silas Deane, John Langdon, and Christopher Gadsden. The four members subsequently added were John Adams, Stephen Hopkins, Joseph Hewes, and R. H. Lee.

On October 30th, it was voted to fit out two more vessels, one of 20 and the other of 30 guns.

On the 2d of November, it was voted that the Marine Committee should be authorized to draw on the Continental Treasurer, for use in carrying out the above-mentioned purposes, for a sum not exceeding $100,000, and the Committee was empowered

to agree with such officers and seamen as are proper to man and command the said vessels, and that the encouragement to such officers and seamen be one half of all ships of war made prizes of by them and one third of all transport vessels, exclusive of wages.

Thus was established the foundation of the prize laws, which remained in force, practically as here set forth, until they were abolished by act of Congress soon after the late Spanish War.

On the 9th of November, 1775, Congress passed an act establishing the Marine Corps of the Navy, with two battalions, to be commanded by a colonel, with two lieutenant-colonels and two majors. Substantially in this form our Marine Corps had remained until a few years ago, when it was greatly enlarged.

It is interesting to note that, within six months after the first hostile gun was fired at Concord, the confederated colonies had already begun the construction of a navy, and in their preliminary work they had builded so well that but little change was found necessary in the main plan of the organization for more than a century.

On November 25, 1775, Congress authorized the capture of any armed vessel employed against the colonies, or any tender or transport engaged in carrying munitions of war to the British army or navy.

Although at first reluctant to adopt the "Rhode Island idea," as the Southern members styled it, yet, having once entered upon the work, Congress seemed to recognize the importance of a navy, and, acting on the report of the Marine Committee, on December 13, 1775, it was ordered that five frigates of 32 guns each, five of 28 guns, and three of 24 guns should be

constructed, all to be completed by the following April. The expense of constructing this fleet was estimated at $866,666.66, and the ships were to be built, one in New Hampshire, two in Massachusetts, one in Connecticut, two in Rhode Island, two in New York, four in Pennsylvania, one in Maryland, and the others at such places as the Marine Committee should designate.

On December 22d, the Naval Committee laid before Congress the following list of officers, which was approved: Esek Hopkins, Commander-in-Chief; Dudley Saltonstall, Abraham Whipple, Nicholas Biddle, John Burroughs Hopkins, as Captains; John Paul Jones, Rhodes Arnold, —— Stansbury, Haysted Hacker, Jonathan Pitcher, First Lieutenants; Benjamin Seabury, Joseph Olney, Elisha Warner, Thomas Weaver, —— McDougall, Second Lieutenants; John Fanning, Ezekial Burroughs, Daniel Vaughan, Third Lieutenants. And so, at short order, the new-born nation was supplied with the nucleus of a reasonably effective navy and its personnel.

Congress, having arranged for the ships and their officers, then set to work at establishing a code of "Rules for the Regulation of the Navy of the United Colonies." These were very thorough, and would seem to provide for every possible contingency. Among other provisions it was directed that "The commanders of the ships of the thirteen United Colonies are to take care that divine service be performed twice a day on board and a sermon preached on Sunday, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent."

Another article read:

If any shall be heard to swear, curse, or blaspheme the name of God, the commander is strictly enjoined to punish

them for every offence by causing them to wear a wooden collar, or some other shameful badge of distinction for so long a time as he shall judge proper. If he be a commissioned officer he shall forfeit one shilling for each offence and a warrant or inferior officer six pence.

Commanding officers were not permitted to inflict as punishment over twelve lashes upon a seaman's bare back with a cat-o'-nine-tails without the sentence of a court-martial.

The allowance of suitable food for the seamen was carefully arranged. On Sunday, in lieu of beef, "a proportion of flour and suet" was to be served out; and that the pudding, or "duff," should be properly boiled, the rules read, "and there shall be supplied once a year a proportion of canvas for pudding bags, after a rate of one ell for every sixteen men."

The Congress, not content to await the construction of the new ships, albeit they were to be built within four months, cast about for such merchant vessels as might be made immediately available against the enemy, exactly as was done by our Navy Department nearly one hundred years later, in the trying days of 1861, and again in 1898. The following merchantmen were bought and hastily armed and equipped for service: Ships—*Alfred*, 24 guns; *Columbus*, 20. Brigs—*Lexington*, 16; *Reprisal*, 16; *Cabot*, 14; *Andrea Doria*, 14; *Hampden*, 14; *Providence*, 12. Sloops—*Independence*, 10; *Sachem*, 10; *Hornet*, 10; *Mosquito*, 4. Schooner—*Wasp*, 8; and *Fly*, tender, 8.

And it was with this little fleet of improvised vessels of war that the Continental Congress and the people of the thirteen colonies were about to try conclusions on the ocean with a nation that had afloat at

that time one hundred line-of-battle ships, one hundred and fifty frigates, and three hundred smaller vessels, manned by 200,000 trained seamen; a force that had successfully matched its strength against the combined navies of Europe.

There was a sublime audacity, a heroic confidence, well-nigh inconceivable in this undertaking. Yet their confidence was amply justified, for during the Revolutionary War more than eight hundred British vessels, valued with their cargoes at $10,000,000, were captured by our cruisers and private armed vessels, while the Continental armies were very largely supplied with clothing and munitions of war from these captures.

The success of our first cruisers was remarkable and their daring unparalleled. Not content with confining their operations to home waters, they invaded the English Channel, until even the coasting trade of Ireland was rendered insecure. Into so great a state of alarm were the Irish linen merchants thrown that they petitioned for, and obtained, a convoy for the linen ships between Newry and Dublin, and Dublin and England, something never before heard of.

Paul Jones was not the only American to enter an English port. An American privateer of twelve guns, in 1777, ran in to a port of the island of Guernsey. The guns of the castle were fired at her, and she tacked and stood out, capturing a large brig just entering the harbor. In the evening she sent in a boat to a small island, near the port called Jetto, and brought off as prisoners the lieutenant of a company and the garrison adjutant. The privateer then carried her prize to Cherbourg, where she was sold for £6000.

The cruisers *Reprisal*, 16, Captain L. Wickes; *Lexington*, 16, Captain H. Johnston; and the *Dolphin*, 10,

Lieutenant S. Nicholson, sailed from Nantes in April, 1777, and, passing up the North Channel, skirted Ireland. In five days they took fourteen vessels, and, putting one hundred and ten prisoners on board the *Crawford*, one of their prizes, they sent them into Whitehaven to dispose of the vessel as they thought proper. During this cruise the *Reprisal* was chased by a British 74, and narrowly escaped capture.

It was largely owing to the daring exploits of our first little navy that Louis XVI. was encouraged to acknowledge the independence of the United States in February, 1778, and to enter into treaties of amity, commerce, and alliance with them.

CHAPTER II

THE "ALFRED," "RANGER," AND "BON HOMME RICHARD"

IN November, 1775, while in command of the military force of Rhode Island at Newport, Esek Hopkins received notice from his brother, Stephen Hopkins, of his selection by the Marine Committee for the command of the Continental fleet, but he was not relieved by General Charles Lee until December 21st. On the following day, the appointment of Hopkins as Commander-in-Chief of the fleet was confirmed by Congress, and about the middle of January he reached Philadelphia, where the newly purchased vessels of his fleet were assembled in the Delaware, with the exception of the *Hornet*, *Wasp*, and *Fly*, which were still fitting at Baltimore, and did not join his squadron until February.

Hopkins arrived in Philadelphia on January 14, 1776, and one morning, about ten days later, the Commodore stepped into his barge at the foot of Walnut Street, and, amid the din of a salute of artillery and the cheers of the assembled crowd of interested spectators, he was pulled by sixteen sturdy seamen in his barge through the ice to his flagship, the *Alfred*.

As he reached the deck, First Lieutenant John Paul Jones, the most picturesque figure in the early history

COMMODORE ESEK HOPKINS, U.S.N.

From a mezzotint portrait published by Thomas Hart in London in 1776

of our navy, broke out from the masthead a yellow silk flag bearing a pine tree, with a rattlesnake coiled about its roots, and the mottoes, "Don't Tread on Me" and "An Appeal to God." This was the first flag hoisted on an American man-of-war!

Of this strange flag, Jones says in his journal. "I always abhorred the device and was glad when it was discarded for one much more symmetrical as well as appropriate, a year and a half later."

The *Alfred*, originally called the *Black Prince*, was built at Maryport, Cumberlandshire, England, in 1766. She was of 440 tons, and had been employed in the North American trade until 1770, when she was bought by a company of Philadelphia merchants trading to the East Indies. As a protection against the Malay pirates she had carried sixteen guns, mainly 6-pounders, with long 9-pounders amidships. Paul Jones surveyed her as the agent of the Marine Committee, and reported that

> her tonnage, stability, and scantling will enable her to mount a battery of 24 long nines on the gun-deck and 6 six-pounders on the quarter-deck, and her berthing and hammock spaces will accommodate a complement of 220 officers, seamen, and marines. This will make her the full equivalent of a 28 gun, nine-pounder, light frigate of the standard British rate.

Jones also reported that the *Alfred* had buoyancy enough to carry twenty-two 12-pounders on her gun-deck, but he doubted if her beams were strong enough, and sagely added, as an afterthought, "besides, we have not the 12-pounders at hand."

The Committee bought the *Alfred* and gave Jones charge of the work of converting her into a light frigate

after his own plans, and he had fully expected to have the command of the ship. During the arduous work of getting the *Alfred* ready for sea, Jones found time to write a remarkable letter to the Marine Committee embodying suggestions upon the personnel of a naval organization, the qualities and qualifications of the ideal naval officer, and the elements of sea power. This communication attracted the attention of General Washington, to whom it was submitted by Mr. Hewes. After reading it, Washington said:

> Mr. Jones is clearly not only a master mariner within the scope of the art of navigation, but he also holds a strong and profound sense of the political and military weight of command on the sea. His powers of usefulness are great and must be constantly kept in view.

Somewhat later, Jones offered to the Marine Committee a series of suggestions upon the comparative value of frigates and ships-of-the-line, in which he discouraged the proposed construction of six 74-gun ships, strongly advocating building in their place several 36-gun, 12-pounder frigates, after the style of those in the French navy. The wisdom of this advice for a young nation with a small navy was conclusively proved in the series of frigate victories we gained in our War of 1812.

The *Alfred* was the first ship ready (on December 22, 1775) to go into commission, and it was a serious disappointment for Jones to find that Captain Saltonstall was preferred before him for the command. He was fain to content himself, however, with a First Lieutenant's commission, dated December 7, 1775, which was handed to him in Independence Hall by John

Hancock in person, shortly after noon, on December 22, 1775. Paul Jones was thus the first officer of the Continental navy to receive his commission. Jones states in his diary that he was offered the command of the sloop *Providence*, but he declined it, as, although an old sailor, he had never sailed in a sloop.

It had been contemplated that this fleet should be used to co-operate with the army in the operations against Charleston, S. C., as is shown by Mr. Gadsden's letter to Hopkins, and it was generally understood that such was to be the first service of the new navy. But, information coming to the "secret committee" of Congress that a large quantity of powder was stored on the island of New Providence, it was ordered that the Marine Committee "take measures for securing and bringing away the said powder and that it be an instruction to the said committee, in case they can secure said powder to have it brought into the port of Philadelphia or to some other port as near Philadelphia as can with safety."

Whereupon Commodore Hopkins was directed to make the best of his way to the southern part of Abaco, of the Bahama Islands. Under these orders Hopkins sailed with his fleet from the mouth of the Delaware, February 17, 1776, and anchored at Abaco on March 1st.

Hopkins was familiar with the Bahama group from his previous experience in command of a merchant vessel, and he had once visited New Providence. His plan was to run in with two small vessels, the *Providence* and the *Wasp*, the landing party being concealed below, and when fairly inside the harbor to land his force and capture the forts, which were very weakly garrisoned.

Jones, in his diary, says:

The plan would have succeeded, and not only the public stores might have been secured, but a considerable contribution might have been obtained as a ransom for the town and island, had not the whole squadron appeared off the harbour in the morning, instead of remaining out of sight 'till after the sloops had entered and the marines had secured the forts. On the appearance of the squadron the signal of alarm was fired, so that it was impossible to think of crossing the bar.

In this dilemma, Jones undertook to carry the *Alfred* into the harbor, and, taking the pilot with him to the foretopmast head, from whence the reefs and shoals could be clearly seen beneath the clear water, the squadron was carried safely in, and on March 3, 1776, the fort was taken by storm by two hundred marines, led by Captain Nicholas of that corps, with fifty sailors under Lieutenant Weaver.

Having obtained possession of the fort, Hopkins seized the military stores and shipped on two schooners 88 cannon, 9- to 36-pounders; 15 mortars, 4- to 11. inch; 5438 shells, 11,000 round shot, and 15 barrels of powder. Only the day before, the governor had shipped 150 barrels of powder to the royal army at Boston.

With this rich booty and Lieutenant-Governor Montford Brown and Thomas Arwin, Inspector-General of Customs in North America, as prisoners, Commodore Hopkins sailed with his heavily laden vessels for home. They reached Long Island Sound on April 4, 1776, capturing that day the British schooner *Hawke*, 6 guns and 8 swivels. Her captain was one Wallace, son of Commodore Wallace, who had made himself very

obnoxious to the Americans while in command of the British fleet off Newport. The following day they made prize of the *Bolton*, a British bomb-brig, 8 guns and 2 swivels, with 48 men.

A little after midnight on April 6th, a strange ship ranged alongside the *Cabot*, and, after exchanging hails and learning who she was, fired two broadsides into her, disabling the American brig, wounding her captain, and killing several men. The enemy, which was the British frigate *Glasgow*, 20, then engaged the *Alfred*, and an unlucky shot carrying away the latter's wheel-block and wheel-ropes, she broached to, giving the English ship the opportunity of raking before the crew of the *Alfred* were in a condition to handle their ship.

The *Cabot* had drifted out of the fight as the *Alfred* closed with the *Glasgow*, and the little *Providence*, having secured a position on the enemy's lee quarter, opened an effective fire. The fight continued for three hours, the American vessels suffering considerably, and at last the *Alfred's* wheel was shot away and she became entirely unmanageable. The *Glasgow*, however, finding her antagonists too numerous, withdrew into Newport Harbor. In this fight the *Cabot* had four killed and seven wounded, the *Alfred* six killed and six wounded, and the *Columbus* one killed.

It is very certain that no particular glory was gained for the Americans by this affair, although our men fought well. There was, however, a lack of experienced officers in the fleet and evidently very little discipline. Jones refers, in his diary, to "his share of the dishonor which attended the first essay of American arms by sea with the *Glasgow*." It was certainly a very different contest from that which was to make the name of Paul Jones famous three years later, when

the *Bon Homme Richard* met the British frigate *Serapis* in the English Channel.

There was some consolation, however, for the Americans in the rich prize of war material Commodore Hopkins brought into port as the result of his expedition to the Bahamas, and when the report of it was laid before Congress it occasioned a feeling of joyous satisfaction.

The Secretary of Congress was directed to publish a part of Commodore Hopkins's report, "so that the colonies might be informed of the success of the enterprise and the worth of the new navy." John Hancock, President of Congress, also sent his personal congratulations to Hopkins in a letter from Philadelphia, dated April 17, 1776, and after asking for a "Compleat List and State of the Stores taken," and regretting that "the *Glasgow* Man of War made her Escape, tho' not thro any Misconduct," he encloses Commodore Hopkins a letter from his agent at Antigua, giving the information that the third division of British transports, six in number, will leave that port in a few days for New York under convoy of an old East India ship mounting sixteen guns. In closing, Hancock significantly adds, "wishing you the greatest success and happiness, I am," etc. But Commodore Hopkins was not prepared for another cruise just then. Trouble was already brewing, and a series of courts-martial speedily followed as the result of the mutual recriminations among the officers of his fleet, who freely accused each other of want of judgment and even of cowardice in having allowed the *Glasgow* to escape. This was, perhaps, the first, but by no means the last, case of the kind in the history of our navy.

A prolonged Congressional inquiry followed, and on

January 2, 1778, Hopkins was finally dismissed from the naval service of the United States. The people of his native State, however, believing him a maligned and injured man, elected him to the Legislature and appointed him a member of the Council of War, a position he held the entire period of its service. Hopkins died in 1802, in his eighty-fourth year, and a bronze figure of heroic size has been reared over his grave in Providence, R. I., commemorating the fact that Esek Hopkins was "Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Navy During the American Revolution from December 22, 1775, to January 2, 1778." The United States Government has also, somewhat tardily, honored the memory of Hopkins by naming a torpedo-destroyer for him, which was launched at Wilmington, Del., on April 24, 1902.

On the 1st of May, 1776, Lieutenant John Paul Jones was ordered by Commodore Hopkins to the command of the schooner *Providence*. His first duty was to carry to New York two hundred soldiers that had been lent to the squadron by General Washington while the ships were short of men. On August 8, 1776, Jones received his commission as captain from John Hancock, the President of Congress; and in October he was ordered to command the *Alfred*, and sailed in company with the *Providence* on a cruise to the northward. Off Louisburg he captured the *Mellish*, a large ship bound for Quebec, having on board eleven thousand stand of arms, several brass field-pieces, and over ten thousand suits of clothing for the British army. He also captured a letter of marque with a rich cargo for Liverpool, besides a number of smaller prizes. Jones got the *Mellish* and her valuable cargo safely into Dartmouth, and the welcome news of this supply of

clothing for his ragged army reached General Washington just before he recrossed the Delaware and won the battle of Trenton.

On May 9, 1777, Jones was notified by the Marine Committee that he was to take the *Amphitrite*, a French ship of twenty guns, from Charleston to France, where he was to assume command "of one of those fine frigates" that Mr. Deane had notified Congress could be purchased in France. But these orders were later superseded by others giving him the command of the *Ranger*, where, on June 14, 1777, Jones hoisted the new national flag, for the first time it was displayed on board a man-of-war. This flag had thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, with thirteen white stars in a blue field. Twenty-six guns were provided for the *Ranger*, but Jones only mounted eighteen 6-pounders, as the ship was very crank.

He sailed on November 1, 1777, carrying despatches that gave the important news of Burgoyne's surrender, and arrived at Nantes on the 2d of December, having captured two brigantines on the voyage. In acknowledging the receipt of his despatches, Jones wrote, "I will spread this news in France in thirty days," and he came so near fulfilling his promise that on the thirty-second day after leaving Portsmouth he landed in Nantes.

Of this voyage Lieutenant Hall says, in his record:

> I had sailed with many captains, in all kinds of voyages, but I never had seen a ship crowded as Captain Jones drove the *Ranger*. . . . Imagine, then, the situation of the *Ranger's* crew, with a top-heavy and crank ship under their feet, and a commander who day and night insisted on every rag she could stagger under without laying clear down.

As it was, she came close to beam-ends more than once, and on one occasion righted only by letting fly sheets cut with hatchets. During all this trying work, Captain Jones was his own navigating officer, keeping the deck eighteen or twenty hours out of every twenty-four.

The officers and crew were equally enthusiastic, and bore all their hardships without grumbling. Their favorite song ended with:

> So, now we had him hard and fast,
> Burgoyne laid down his Arms at Last,
> And that is why we Brave the Blast,
> To carry the news to London.

On the morning of December 5, 1777, Jones placed his despatches, written by Washington and Jefferson, in the hands of Dr. Franklin in Paris. Unfortunately, Mr. John Loring Austin, who was the bearer of a copy of these despatches and had come over on a fast French ship, reached Paris twelve hours ahead of Jones.

The receipt of this important intelligence induced King Louis XVI. "to consider favorably the overtures of the Commissioners of the United States," and it was hoped that our Commissioners would be permitted to fit out and place under the command of Jones the ship *Indien*, 46, then just completed at Amsterdam. The British Minister to the Netherlands, however, denounced the vessel to the States-General as an American ship-of-war in disguise, exactly as Mr. Adams did in the case of the Laird *Ram*, built in Liverpool for the Confederate government in 1864; and the *Indien* project fell through, to the great disappointment of Captain Jones.

Jones now took the *Ranger* from Nantes to L'Orient

and fitted her, and on February 13, 1778, received from the French squadron in the outer road of Brest the first salute from a foreign naval power ever accorded to the American flag. On April 10th, the *Ranger* sailed from Brest for the west coast of Ireland, but the second day out a westerly gale set in and Captain Jones decided to run up through St. George's Channel into the Irish Sea. At Whitehaven he landed on April 22d, and after spiking the guns in the two small forts, which were only garrisoned by a few coast-guards, he set fire to several ships in the basin and sailed away before the arrival of two sloops-of-war sent to the protection of the place. The same day, Jones bore up for the north shore of Solway Frith and made his famous descent on St. Mary's Isle, the castle of the Earl of Selkirk, hoping to carry off the Earl and hold him as a hostage for the better treatment of American prisoners then in England. His design was frustrated, however, by the absence of the Earl from the castle.

On the afternoon of April 23, 1778, the *Ranger* stood across the Irish Channel, and the next morning Jones learned from some fishermen, whose boats he picked up and who were very ready to give the information, that the British sloop-of-war *Drake*, Captain Burden, the guard-ship at Carrickfergus, was coming out in search of him. Jones had looked in at Carrickfergus on the 21st, and had the wind served would have attacked the *Drake* at that time. "So now," as he says in his journal, "to save trouble I ran down again, hove to off the mouth of Belfast Lough, and waited for the *Drake* to work out, which saved me the pain of going in after her." As the *Ranger* hove to off Carrickfergus on the 24th, the *Drake* sent out one of her

boats to reconnoitre, and Jones succeeded in decoying this boat alongside the *Ranger* and captured the midshipman and five men that formed her crew. The *Drake*, with wind and tide both against her, worked out of port slowly, and it was nearly sundown when she got within hail. Both vessels were then before the wind, standing to the northward, with a very light southerly breeze and a smooth sea. The *Drake*, coming up astern of the *Ranger*, hailed, "What ship is that?" Jones answered, "The American Continental ship *Ranger*. Come on, we are waiting for you!"

Both ships fired, almost at once, the *Ranger* a trifle the first. The range was little more than musket-shot, and the fire of the Americans was very deadly. The engagement was kept up for nearly an hour, when, the *Drake's* rigging being very much cut up, her fore- and maintopsail-yards came down on the caps, and as she fell off Jones luffed under her stern, and with the starboard tacks on board came into a position to rake his enemy, when her colors were at once struck and the *Drake* was surrendered by her second lieutenant, the captain and first lieutenant having been killed during the engagement.

The *Drake* was a new ship, less than three years off the stocks, mounting twenty guns, sixteen 9-pounders and four 4-pounders, with a complement of 157 officers and men. The *Ranger* had fourteen 9-pounders and four 6-pounders, and 126 officers and men. The British loss was nineteen killed, including the captain and first lieutenant, and twenty-eight officers and men severely wounded. The Americans lost two killed, including Lieutenant Wallingford, and six wounded, one mortally. The *Drake* received 107 shot, 36 at or below the water-line; while her upper works were wrecked,

five guns dismounted, her standing and running rigging much damaged, and her foremast seriously weakened,—a striking evidence of the superior gunnery of the Americans.

Jones continued his cruise around the west coast of Ireland, although after manning his prize he had but eighty-six officers and crew remaining on board the *Ranger*. Before returning to Brest he captured a valuable prize off Malin Head, laden with naval stores. During this short cruise of twenty-eight days, Jones took six merchant prizes, destroying three of them, and sent into Brest the *Drake*, a ship of superior force to his own, and three merchantmen.

When Jones appeared off Brest on the evening of May 8th, the French frigate *Belle Poule* stood out and hailed, "Who are you, and what is your prize?" To which Jones responded: "The American Continental ship *Ranger*, of eighteen guns, Captain Paul Jones; and the man-of-war prize is His Britannic Majesty's late ship the *Drake*, of twenty guns. The other prize a-lee is a merchant ship, not armed."

Jones was directed to anchor for the night under the lee of Roscannel Point, and the next day he took his vessels into the inner harbor, where his prize was visited by hundreds of officers and officials, among them the Duc de Chartres, and for the time the American captain was the hero of the hour. But within a month his troubles began, and Jones was actually compelled to sell his prizes to provide means for paying and feeding his crew, as his draft on the American Commissioners for 24,000 livres was dishonored. Jones wrote to the Commissioners on May 27, 1778:

. . Are, then, the Continental ships of war to de-

pend on sale of their prizes for the daily dinner of their men? Has it come to this, that I and my truly poor, brave men must not only fight without pay, but also compel our enemy to feed us? Is then, our cause become so mendicant that men who so victoriously defend it must not only take the chances of death in battle, but also face the fate of beggary and even starvation after they have conquered?

After his return to France from this cruise, Jones suggested a number of plans to M. de Sartine, French Minister of Marine, and they were discussed with the American Commissioners. One of these, in which Paul Jones was to take an active part, contemplated a descent upon Liverpool by a naval force, which was to cover the landing of a large body of troops under M. de Lafayette. But none of these projects came to anything.

At last, after infinite difficulty and no end of diplomatic intrigue, M. de Sartine, in a letter to Franklin, states that King Louis XVI. has decided to purchase and put at the disposition of Captain Jones the *Duras*, an old high-poop Indiaman, then at L'Orient. To the *Duras* was finally added, through the influence of the banker, M. le Ray de Chaumant, four other vessels—the *Pallas*, 32, and the *Vengeance*, 12; two purchased merchantmen—the *Cerf*, a large cutter, and the *Alliance*, 32, a ship built for war purposes.

After being refitted, this little fleet was placed under the American flag and the officers received commissions, valid for a limited period only, from Dr. Franklin, as the representative of the American government. The laws and provisions of our navy were to govern them, and Captain Jones, by special provision, was to be Commander-in-Chief, while Captain Landais was to

be his junior. Unfortunately, just before sailing, M. Chaumant came to L'Orient bringing a *concordat*, or agreement, which all the commanders were asked to sign, and this irregular proceeding afterward resulted in constant breaches of discipline among the officers, especially in the case of Landais.

The *Duras* originally carried her guns on one deck, with a certain number of light pieces on the quarter-deck and forecastle; but Jones had twelve ports cut in the gun-room below, where he had six old 18-pounders mounted, very unfortunately, as it subsequently proved. When ready for sea, the *Duras*, renamed the *Bon Homme Richard*, in honor of Dr. Franklin, mounted twenty-eight 12-pounders on the gun-deck, eight 9-pounders on the forecastle and quarter-deck, and six 18's below—making forty-two guns in all. In view of the desperate fight that was awaiting him on the coming cruise, Jones was very fortunate in securing for the *Richard*, just before he sailed, one hundred American seamen, who had been exchanged for the captured crew of the *Drake* and other British ships. With this accession he had one hundred and fifty Americans in his crew.

On the 14th of August, 1779, Paul Jones sailed with his little squadron from the road of Isle de Groaix, and for ten days his cruise in the mouth of the Channel was comparatively uneventful. A trading brig and a brigantine were captured and sent into port. On the 23d of August, while two boats were out in a calm, towing the head of the *Richard* to the tide to keep her from drifting on the Shallocks reef, the English crew in one boat overpowered the two Americans, and, cutting the towline, pulled for the shore. Mr. Cutting Lunt was sent with ten seamen and marines in pursuit, but the

Yours Truly
PAUL JONES

COMMODORE JOHN PAUL JONES, U.S.N.
From the portrait by G. W. Peale

runaways escaped, while Mr. Lunt, getting too close in shore, was captured with his men. By this misadventure two boats and twenty-three officers and men were lost. Including the crews sent in prizes, the *Richard's* complement had thus been reduced by thirty-nine within ten days.

On the morning of August 31st, the west coast of the Hebrides being abeam, the *Richard* captured the British letter of marque *Union*, mounting twenty-two 6-pounders, laden with a cargo of naval and military stores for the British forces in Canada, and carrying a valuable mail, including despatches from the British government for Sir Guy Carleton in Canada, and Sir William Howe at New York. These despatches, however, were lost, as the *Alliance* showed American colors, and the captain of the *Union* at once threw his important papers overboard. This valuable prize, with another captured the same day by the *Alliance*, were sent in to Bergen. They were both subsequently returned to the British government by the King of Denmark, who had not yet recognized the United States as a sovereign power, and consequently did not respect her right to capture prizes on the high seas.

After an attempt to attack the port of Leith, which was rendered ineffectual by a heavy northwest gale, the *Richard* and the *Pallas* worked to the southward, hoping to fall in with the Baltic merchant fleet; and on the 22d of September, Jones discovered a fleet of colliers anchored under the lee of Spurn Head, in the mouth of the Humber, and under convoy of a frigate. Just before dark, while meditating an attack on the fleet, the little *Vengeance* ran under the lee of the *Richard* and informed Captain Jones that the Baltic fleet

had put in to Bridlington Bay, under convoy, to await a shift of wind to enable them to fetch the Downs.

Ordering the *Vengeance* to stand down to the southward and eastward and notify the *Alliance* that the next rendezvous would be Flamboro' Head, Jones laid his ship's head north-northeast, signalling the *Pallas* to keep on his starboard quarter and not to lose sight of the *Richard*.

In the morning, both the American ships were out of sight of land, and, as the wind was light,—southwest,—they were all the forenoon beating up for Bridlington Bay, and in doing so fetched so far to leeward that Flamboro' Head was on the port, instead of the starboard beam, in the last tack inshore. To weather the Head they wore offshore at one o'clock, and, as they were hauling up on the starboard tack, the whole Baltic fleet came running out of Bridlington Bay before the wind, steering north-northeast for Scarboro, the two convoys covering their rear and flank.

Jones at once hauled his ship up to the wind in the endeavor to get, if possible, between the land and the larger ship, and as the breeze was light the whole afternoon was consumed in accomplishing this manœuvre; but by sundown Jones had succeeded in getting into the desired position, with Flamboro' Head bearing due east, distant about seven miles.

By seven o'clock there was a full moon, and as the two ships neared each other on opposite tacks, Jones saw that his antagonist was a small two-decker. She proved to be the *Serapis*, 44, Captain Richard Pearson, with twenty long 18's on her lower deck, twenty-two long 9's on her upper deck, and eight 9-pounders on her quarter-deck—in all fifty guns. Her effective complement was 317 men.

The story of this desperate sea-fight has been repeatedly told in the official reports of Captains Jones and Pearson, the personal narratives of surviving officers of both ships, the testimony elicited at the two courts-martial, and in the numerous contemporaneous pamphlets printed in France, England, and America, so that it is not difficult from these different sources to obtain a correct idea of its various incidents.

At 7.15, the two ships were heading northwest, on the same tack, the wind light from southwest. There was a smooth sea, a clear sky, and a full moon rising. The commander of the *Serapis* hailed twice, and at the instant of the second hail both ships fired their broadsides at a range of about eight hundred feet. Almost at the first fire the *Richard's* gun-room battery of 18-pounders was disabled by two of them bursting back of their trunnions, wounding a number of their crews, lifting the gun-deck above them, and causing great demoralization.

Acting-Lieutenant John Maynant, in command of this division, was wounded in the head, but he remained on duty, reporting the occurrence to Lieutenant Dale and advising that the 18-pounders be abandoned, as they were a lot of condemned French guns, and it was evident that the men could not be induced to work them further after this accident. This reduced the *Richard's* broadside to fourteen 12-pounders on the main-deck and four 9-pounders on the quarter-deck, throwing 204 pounds of metal, against the broadside of the *Serapis* of ten 18-pounders and fifteen 9-pounders, throwing 315 pounds of metal. This very serious disparity soon began to tell on the American ship. As the *Serapis* was forereaching on his antagonist, Captain Pearson believed he could luff across the *Richard's*

hawse, rake her, and, by tacking around her bows, gain the weather-gage on the other tack.

But this delicate manœuvre failed, as the *Richard* continued to forge ahead, and it became evident that if the *Serapis* attempted to tack at such close quarters the ships would foul and thus enable the *Richard* to grapple and board the enemy. The musketry fire from the American ship was also proving very fatal to the crew of the *Serapis*.

Pearson therefore boxhauled his ship, and as her bow paid off he tried to let her fall off to leeward, clear of the *Richard*. But in doing this the stern of the *Serapis* swung to, and Jones, seizing the opportunity, ran his ship's jib-boom over the English ship's larboard quarter into her mizzen-rigging, and attempted to grapple by throwing grapnels from his forecastle into the mizzen-backstays of the *Serapis*. The irons caught, but their lines parted as the British ship fell off and the *Richard* forged ahead, so that for a time none of the guns of either ship could be brought to bear.

The fight had now lasted three quarters of an hour, and, as the ships came abeam again, the *Richard* was in a sad plight, as described by quarter-gunner Henry Gardner. Of her fourteen 12-pounders, nine were either dismounted or so jammed by the wreckage of the port openings as to be unserviceable; the 18-pounders, as we have seen, had been abandoned as too dangerous to use, while of the 144 officers and men stationed at the gun-deck battery, over 80 were killed or wounded. The whole deck was slippery with blood and littered with fragments of heads, bodies, and limbs. Several 18-pound shot had pierced the *Richard's* hull between wind and water, and there was already over three feet of water in her hold, which was rapidly gaining.

Yet [says Gardner], although we could see from the ports that the ship had already sunk at least two feet from her natural trim, and despite this wreck and carnage, I could not see that any of our remaining men were disposed to flinch, or that the five guns we had left were worked with any less will than at the start.

Just at this time the Commodore came down on the gun-deck and said to Mr. Dale, who was at the moment near me: "Dick, his metal is too heavy for us at this business. He is hammering us all to pieces. We must close with him. We must get hold of him! Be prepared at any moment to abandon this deck and bring whatever men you have left on the spar-deck—and give them the small arms for boarding when you come up."

At this period of the fight the *Alliance* appeared, and Jones naturally supposed that with this reinforcement the battle was at an end; but, to his astonishment, Captain Landais discharged a broadside into the stern of the *Richard* and then ran off close-hauled to the northward, out of gunshot. By this time the wind had hauled to about west and had freshened, and as the ships were not more than one hundred feet apart, the *Richard* blanketed the *Serapis*, and as she lost way Jones took advantage of a puff of wind, shot his ship ahead of the *Serapis*, and broached her to across the Englishman's forefoot. Captain Pearson at once threw all his after-sails aback, hoping to back his ship clear of his enemy, but, unfortunately, his starboard anchor caught in the *Richard's* channels and held the ships together. Pearson then ordered the anchor to be let go by cutting away the ring-stopper and shank-painter, but the fire from the American marines was so hot that this could not be done, as every man that approached the bow rail was picked off, and the English

third lieutenant, Mr. Popplewell, was shot through the head in a last desperate attempt to cut the anchor fastenings. In fact, our sharpshooters entirely cleared the forecastle of the *Serapis* by their deadly fire. And in this work Jones took a most prominent part in person, cheering and encouraging the French marines in their own language, exhorting them to take good aim, and toward the last he had about him a group of half a dozen marines who did nothing but load the muskets and hand them to the Commodore, who fired them standing on the quarter-deck rail by the maintop-backstay.

One of the French volunteers, Pierre Gerard, in his narrative, says:

> When Captain Chamillard, commandant of marines, suffering a contusion of the knee, quit his post, Commodore Jones sprung among the shaking marines on the quarter-deck like a tiger among calves. They responded instantly to him. In an instant they were filled with courage! The indomitable spirit, the unconquerable courage of the Commodore penetrated every soul, and every one who saw his example or heard his voice became as much a hero as himself.

At this moment the gunner, Arthur Randall, thinking the *Richard* was sinking, called for quarter; and as the American flag had been shot from the gaff and was trailing in the water astern, Captain Pearson hailed to know if the American ship had struck, to which Jones responded, with an oath, "No; I have just begun to fight!" and the battle continued.

Pearson, at the court-martial, testified that this answer from Jones was reported to him by Midshipman Hood. "This," he said, "I had first thought to

be mere bravado upon his part. But I soon perceived that it was the defiance of a man desperate enough, if he could not conquer, to sink with his ship alongside."

In the midst of this excitement, the master-at-arms, believing the *Richard* was about to sink, opened the orlop hatch and let loose more than two hundred prisoners confined below. Fortunately, Midshipman Potter, with a few men, held the prisoners in check, so that only about fifty of them reached the upper deck, and these were sent to the pumps and kept at work by Lieutenant Dale after one of their number, who objected, had been shot.

It was now 9.30 o'clock, and the battle had been raging fiercely for two hours and a quarter. The British had been driven from the upper deck by the American musket-fire, but the gun-fire from the lower tier of the *Serapis* was steadily kept up. The two ships' sides being in contact, the burning wads set fire to the wreckage on the *Richard's* gun-deck and burned through the deck, reaching to within a few feet of the magazine bulkhead. At this time the American ship had five feet of water in her hold.

Jones now ordered Lieutenant Edward Stack to send some hand-grenades into the maintop and endeavor to drop them from the main-yard down the enemy's main-hatch. This was done, and at the third trial a grenade was dropped through a triangular opening in the hatch and, falling in the midst of a pile of cartridges, caused a tremendous explosion, by which fully fifty men were killed or wounded, and the crews abandoned their guns, to which they could only be driven back again with great difficulty.

At this time the *Alliance* again appeared, for the second time in the engagement, and, running across

the bow of the *Richard* and the stern of the *Serapis*, raked both ships indiscriminately with round, grape, and bar shot. This, notwithstanding Jones (as he testified at the court-martial of Captain Landais), "constantly called from the *Richard* for him not to fire, but to lay the enemy alongside." From this fire, Master's Mate Caswell and several men were wounded. The *Alliance* again ran off to leeward and took no further part in the action.

Captain Pearson, who seems to have been fertile in expedient, now let go his larboard anchor, hoping, as his ship brought up, she might drift clear of the *Richard;* but it was calm, and as the lashings held the two ships swung to the anchor. Jones not only kept up his deadly musketry fire, but by constant hammering with the three 9-pounders on his quarter-deck, he had nearly cut in two the mainmast of the *Serapis* ten feet above her deck. As an evidence of the havoc made by the sharpshooters, Dr. Bannatyne, the English surgeon, says: "No less than eleven men were shot at our wheel, seven of whom were killed outright, and all, without exception, were struck by musket balls."

At this period of the fight the mainmast of the *Serapis* fell, carrying with it the mizzentopmast. Soon after, Jones mustered a boarding party of twenty-five or thirty sailors, each with a cutlass and two pistols, and a few with hatchets, and, headed by Acting-Lieutenant John Maynant, they boarded the *Serapis*, landing in the waist at the break of the top-gallant-forecastle. As Maynant's feet struck the deck, a sailor stuck a sharp boarding-pike through the fleshy part of his thigh, but the lieutenant shot the Englishman at the same moment, killing him instantly. The American boarders carried everything before them, and Cap-

tain Pearson, seeing they were in full possession of the fore part of his ship, seized the halliards of the ensign and lowered the flag of the *Serapis* himself, the mainmast going by the board as he was striking.

But the confusion was so great that for several minutes the firing from the gun-deck of the *Serapis* and from the marines of the *Richard* continued, until Maynant called to Lieutenant Dale: "He has struck; stop the firing. Come on board and take possession!" Dale at once swung himself on board and, going aft, said to Captain Pearson: "I have the honor, sir, to be the first lieutenant of the ship alongside, which is the American Continental ship *Bon Homme Richard*, under command of Commodore Paul Jones. What ship is this?"

"His Britannic Majesty's late ship, the *Serapis*, sir," was the response, "and I am Captain Richard Pearson."

"Pardon me, sir," said the young American, "in the haste of the moment I forgot to inform you that my name is Richard Dale, and I must request you to pass on board the ship alongside."

The first lieutenant of the *Serapis* coming up from below at this moment, and seeing the American officer, inquired of his captain, "Has the enemy struck, sir?"

"No, sir," responded Pearson ; "I have struck."

In his journal, Jones describes the formal surrender as follows:

Captain Pearson now confronted me, the image of chagrin and despair. He offered me his sword with a slight bow, but was silent. His first lieutenant followed suit. I was sorry for them, for they had fought their ship better and braver than any English ship was ever fought before,

and this fortune of war came hard to them. I wanted to speak, but they were so sad and dignified in their silence I hardly knew what to say. Finally I mustered courage and said, as I took the swords and handed them to Midshipman Potter at my elbow, "Captain Pearson, you have fought heroically. You have worn this sword to your own credit and to the honor of your service. I hope your sovereign will suitably reward you." He bowed again, but made no reply, whereupon I requested him and his lieutenant to accompany Mr. Potter to my cabin.

It was midnight when this most remarkable seafight ended, and upon inspection it was found that the *Richard* had seven feet of water in her hold, although the pumps were constantly running, double-manned by the English prisoners. The lashings that held the ships were now cut and they drifted apart. After mustering the crew it was found that the *Richard* had sixty killed and over one hundred and twenty wounded; nearly every 12-pounder gun in the starboard broadside was dismounted or disabled, the starboard side of the ship had been fairly driven in, almost to the water's edge, abreast of the *Serapis's* lower tier of 18-pounders, and her rudder was cut entirely off.

It was at once apparent that she could not be kept afloat, and, in fact, had it not been almost calm, with an unusually smooth sea, the *Richard* would have surely sunk before the battle ended. The removal of the wounded American officers and crew to the *Serapis* was at once begun, but it was not until nearly evening of the following day that this task was completed. The crew and the English prisoners were also transferred, and then, last of all, Paul Jones, leaving the *Richard* alone with the dead for whom she made a fitting sepulchre, stepped into his boat and bade adieu

to the gallant ship with whose fame his name will always be associated.

In his journal, Jones says:

> The ensign-gaff, shot away in action, had been fished and put in place soon after firing ceased, and our torn and tattered flag was left flying when we abandoned her. As she plunged down by the head at the last, her taffrail momentarily rose in the air; so the very last vestige mortal eyes ever saw of the *Bon Homme Richard* was the defiant wavering of her unconquered and unstricken flag as she went down. And as I had given them the good old ship for their sepulchre, I now bequeathed to my immortal dead the flag they had so desperately defended for their winding-sheet!

This flag had an uncommon history. It was made from pieces of their best silk gowns by the young ladies of Portsmouth, N. H., to hoist on the *Ranger*, on July 4, 1777, and it was the first American flag to be saluted by the guns of a European naval power at L'Orient. Jones then carried it with him to the *Bon Homme Richard*. When he returned to America in 1781, he met Miss Langdon, one of the original donors, to whom he said that it was his ardent desire to bring the flag, with all its glories, back untarnished to the fair hands that had given it to him four years before. "But, Miss Mary," he added, "I could n't bear to strip it from the poor old ship in her last agony, nor could I deny to my dead on her decks, who had given their lives to keep it flying, the glory of taking it with them!"

"You did exactly right, Commodore," she responded. "That flag is just where we all wish it to be—flying at the bottom of the sea over the only ship ever sunk in victory. If you had taken it from her and brought it back to us, we would hate you!"

During the *Richard-Serapis* fight, Captain Cottineau, in the *Pallas*, had also captured the British sloop-of-war, *Countess of Scarboro*, 20, and, after the *Richard* had sunk, the *Pallas*, with her prize, joined the Commodore, but the *Alliance*, under the dastardly Landais, had disappeared. The situation of Jones was now critical. Of the *Richard's* crew on board the captured *Serapis* there were but 150 fit for duty, while, in addition to handling their prize thus short-handed, they were called upon to guard 211 English prisoners brought from the *Richard* and 111 of the crew of the *Serapis* who were unwounded, while there were 240 English and American wounded to care for. In all, there were now 712 souls on board the *Serapis*.

On the 25th of September, 100 of the wounded English prisoners were transferred to the *Pallas*, where there were already 169 prisoners, taken from her prizes. With great delicacy of feeling, Captain Pearson was also transferred from the *Serapis*, where he had so lately been in command, to the *Pallas*, where the situation would naturally be less painful for him.

After taking command of the *Serapis*, Jones at once rigged jury-masts, and, after tossing about in the North Sea for ten days with head winds and bad weather, the fleet bore away for the Texel, where they anchored October 3, 1779. They narrowly missed falling in with the British ship *Edgar*, 74, that was in search of them.

At the Texel the 504 British prisoners were landed, and after months of tedious negotiation, and sorely against his will, Jones gave up his prisoners and his prizes to the French King, and assumed command of the *Alliance* in December, 1779.

On Christmas Day he ran through the Straits of

Dover and down the English Channel, and then cruised as far south as Corunna. While off that port, his crew sent Jones a petition, which read: "We respectfully request you, sir, to lay us alongside any single-decked English ship to be found in these seas, or any double-decked ship under a fifty."

Jones was delighted with the spirit of his crew, of whom many had been with him in the fight with the *Serapis*, and he says in his journal that he felt confident that they would have been equal to the occasion had opportunity offered, but no English man-of-war crossed their track, and the *Alliance* returned to L'Orient, February 14, 1780, for much-needed repairs.

Paul Jones was received with extraordinary honors at the French Court, and was invested with the Grand Cross of the Order of Military Merit by Louis XVI., while he was courted by the nobility and became the hero of the day in Paris.

In 1781, Jones returned to the United States, where he received the thanks of Congress, a commendatory letter from General Washington, and was given charge of the construction of the *America*, 74, the first line-of-battle ship built in the United States. When completed, this fine vessel was presented to the King of France as compensation for the loss of the *Magnifique*, stranded in Boston Harbor while serving in the Revolutionary War. The *America* was later captured by the British from the French, and was incorporated into the English navy.

On October 16, 1787, Congress passed a resolution

> That a medal of gold be struck and presented to Chevalier Paul Jones, in commemoration of the valor and brilliant services of that officer in command of a squadron of

American and French ships under the flag and commission of the United States, off the coast of Great Britain, in the late war; and that the Honorable Thomas Jefferson, Minister of the United States at the Court of Versailles, have the same executed with the proper devices.

The second article of this resolution stated that

it would be acceptable to Congress that His Majesty [the French King] would be pleased to permit him [Paul Jones] to embark with His Majesty's fleets of evolution, convinced that he can nowhere else so well acquire that knowledge which may hereafter render him more extensively useful.

The Secretary of Foreign Affairs was ordered by Congress to prepare a letter to be signed by the President, embodying the above resolution, which Jones was to deliver "into the hands of His Most Christian Majesty." A week later Congress conferred by resolution powers upon Commodore Jones as agent to collect prize-moneys, particularly in cases then pending at the Danish Court. This last honor Jones declined, and at his request the resolution was amended, placing the responsibility as prize-agent in the hands of Jefferson.

Before he left the United States, in 1787, for France, Congress recommended the settlement of Jones's claim for "pay, advances and expenses," amounting to £9,784 16*s.* 1*d.*, "or such part thereof as may, consistently with the existing condition of the Treasury, be practicable." As the Board of Treasury could only pay £2,000 on account, Jones declined to accept any part at that time, and it was not until July 6, 1848, that Congress appropriated $50,000 for the benefit of the heirs-at-law of Paul Jones in full settlement of this claim.

Before the gallant Commodore sailed from the shores of America for the last time, he was entertained at a grand dinner in New York, on November 10, 1787, by John Jay, at which forty guests were at table. On November 11th, Jones sailed in the ship *Governor Clinton*, and was landed at Dover nineteen days later. In London he stayed one week, having confidential letters for our Minister, Mr. Adams, and he then passed over to Paris, where he remained until January, 1788, when Mr. Jefferson sent him to Copenhagen as plenipotentiary agent. At the Danish Court he received special attention, and was a great favorite with the royal personages. While at Copenhagen, the Russian Minister, Baron Krudsner, laid before Jones a definite proposition from the Empress Catherine, in her own handwriting, offering him the command of her naval forces in the Black Sea, to co-operate with the army under General Suwarrow. His rank was to be "captain-commandant with the rank of major-general." Jones accepted the offer with the proviso that his rank should be rear-admiral, and this was finally granted.

In writing to Jefferson, under date of April 8, 1788, of his acceptance of this brilliant offer, Jones says: "I am not forsaking the country that has had so many disinterested and difficult proofs of my affection, and can never renounce the glorious title of citizen of the United States." He then goes on to explain his desire for active service, and closes: "I pray you, sir, to explain the circumstances of my situation and be the interpreter of my sentiments to the United States in Congress."

When Jones reported at St. Petersburg in April, the English officers already in the Russian service were intensely indignant at his appointment as rear-admiral,

and as a result of their jealousy several officers were dismissed by order of the Empress; while one of them, Lieutenant Edwards, who spoke Russian well, was ordered to report to Admiral Jones as aide-de-camp and interpreter, and in these capacities he subsequently served with Jones in the Black Sea, to the entire satisfaction of the Admiral.

On May 7th, Jones set out from the capital for Kherson, 1300 miles distant, in a royal tarantass, and, reaching his destination in twelve days, was assigned by Prince Potemkin to the squadron of Kherson of seventeen vessels, two of 70 guns, five frigates, and ten corvettes of from 16 to 24 guns each. Two other large ships subsequently joined his squadron, making nineteen in all. The new Admiral at once began a course of cleaning, fumigating, and overhauling his ships; and, finding them undermanned, obtained a detachment of 3000 soldiers from Suwarrow's army as an addition to his crews. Jones at once established a rigid system of discipline, based upon French methods.

Notwithstanding the natural jealousy of the American sailor promoted over their heads, the Russian naval officers recognized the great ability and desperate courage of their new Admiral, and in the engagements with the Turks during the Liman campaign they supported him admirably. In the action of June 17th, in which the Russian and Turkish fleets were each of about the same size, the Turks lost nine of their large ships and twenty gunboats, with 3000 casualties, while the Russian loss was one frigate and six gunboats sunk, with 700 killed and wounded. The following October, the Empress invested Jones with the Order of St. Anne, and promoted him to Vice-Admiral; but, disgusted with the intrigues of the Court and the intolerable

jealousy of Prince Potemkin and General Nassau-Siegen, he gladly accepted a year's leave of absence, and after visiting Warsaw, Vienna, Munich, and Amsterdam, Jones arrived in Paris, in May, 1790, where he remained until July 18, 1792, when he died of dropsy of the breast, just as he had been appointed, at the request of Jefferson, United States Commissioner for treating with the Bey of Algiers on the subject of peace and of the ransom of Americans held in captivity by that power. In his last moments, while gasping for breath, Jones bequeathed—by the hands of Gouverneur Morris—"the sword of honor" he had received from King Louis of France to Richard Dale—"my good old Dick,"—as he called the gallant officer who had been his first lieutenant in the *Bon Homme Richard*, the *Alliance*, and the *Ariel*.

During the years 1864–65, the keel of a ship, to be called the *Bon Homme Richard*, was laid at the New York Navy Yard. This vessel was designed to be a screw-steamer of 3713 tons, with an armament of twenty guns. Her engines were to be built at the Washington Navy Yard. But with the immediate reduction of the navy that followed the cessation of hostilities in 1865, all work ceased on the ship, and she was never built.

The *Ranger*, commanded by Captain Simpson, was captured by the British fleet at Charleston, S. C., in 1780, after the city had surrendered.

The second *Ranger* was a brig, purchased in 1814. She mounted fourteen guns, and was stationed on Lake Ontario. She was condemned and sold in 1821. The third *Ranger* was a purchased schooner mounting one gun, purchased in Baltimore in 1814, and sold in 1816. The fourth *Ranger* in our service, built in 1874, is a

single-screw iron cruiser of 1020 tons, and 500 horse power, with a battery of six guns. She is at present (1902) on special service as a surveying ship in the Pacific, under command of Commander William P. Potter. During the Colombian revolution in the summer of 1902, the *Ranger* was ordered down to Panama to aid in protecting American interests in the Isthmus.

In August, 1777, the *Alfred*, under command of Captain Elisha Hinman, sailed for France in company with the *Raleigh*, a new 12-pounder frigate built at Portsmouth, N. H., and commanded by Captain Thomas Thompson. These vessels were sent to bring over military stores awaiting transportation to America. On the voyage over to France they captured several British merchantmen, and on September 3d the *Raleigh* had a sharp engagement with the sloop-of-war *Druid*, 20, Captain Carteret, while endeavoring to cut out some vessels from an outward-bound West India fleet she was convoying. The *Druid* was much cut up, and suffered a loss of six killed and twenty-six wounded, while the *Raleigh* had but three killed and wounded. As the *Druid* had two other vessels of war, the *Weasel* and the *Grasshopper*, in company, as well as several heavily armed West-Indiamen, Captain Thompson was forced to withdraw from this unequal engagement, and the *Druid*, unable to pursue the voyage, returned to England.

After taking in the military stores in France, the two American vessels sailed from L'Orient for home in February, 1778, and on March 9th were chased by the British ships *Ariadne* and *Ceres*. Being astern of the *Raleigh*, the *Alfred* was first engaged by the two British ships, and, after a few broadsides, the contest being hopeless against such odds, as the *Raleigh* did not come to

her aid, the *Alfred* struck her colors. Although hard pressed, the *Raleigh* escaped from her enemies. As the British accounts state the force of the *Alfred* at twenty 9-pounders, she probably did not carry on this foreign voyage the four 6-pounders with which she was originally fitted out.

CHAPTER III

THE "REPRISAL"

THE brig *Reprisal*, 16 guns, purchased and equipped by the agents of the Continental Congress in 1775, was the first United States vessel of war to appear in European waters; her commander was Captain Lambert Wickes, and his commission was dated 22d of December, 1775. In the summer of 1776, the *Reprisal* made a cruise in the West Indies and captured several prizes, among them the British ship *Friendship* and the schooner *Peter*. When off St. Pierre, Martinique, in the month of July, the British sloop-of-war *Shark*, 16 guns, Captain Chapman, laid the *Reprisal* close alongside and opened on her before Captain Wickes was entirely prepared for action. But the Americans speedily rallied, and although short-handed, having eighty of her crew absent in prizes, the *Reprisal* made so gallant a fight that the *Shark* finally withdrew, and Captain Wickes took his prizes safely in to Martinique. This spirited engagement was witnessed from the shore by large numbers of the inhabitants of the island.

As this combat took place before the Declaration of Independence, the British captain followed the *Reprisal* into port, and demanded of the Governor of Martinique that she be given up to him as a pirate. The

demand was refused, however, but Captain Wickes was requested to leave the port.

The *Reprisal* returned to Boston in July, 1776, and she was then ordered to take Benjamin Franklin, our Commissioner to the Court of Versailles, to France. Captain Wickes sailed in November, flying a flag with thirteen red stripes in a yellow and white field, and in the chops of the English Channel captured two British brigs, laden with wine, which he carried into Nantes, December 7, 1776. These were the first American prizes that had entered a French port since the beginning of the Revolution.

After landing Franklin, Captain Wickes sailed, and during a short cruise on the coast of England captured three merchantmen and a King's packet that ran between Falmouth and Lisbon, and brought them all into Nantes. To "save the face" of the French authorities, and in view of the violent protest of the British Ambassador against what he claimed was the violation of a neutral port, Captain Wickes made a sale of his prizes on the high seas, so that they entered port under new owners, and the proceeds of the prizes was turned over to the American Commissioners to purchase ships for our navy.

In April, 1777, the *Lexington*, 16 guns, Captain H. Johnson, was sent over to France, and Dr. Franklin and Silas Deane, the Commissioners, put her, with the *Dolphin*, 10 guns, Lieutenant Samuel Nicholson, under the orders of Captain Wickes, and directed him to intercept a fleet of linen ships they had learned was to sail from Belfast.

The little fleet sailed from Nantes early in June, and made a circuit of the Irish coast, capturing fourteen vessels in five days. On their return, the ships were

chased in the Bay of Biscay by a British line-of-battle ship. The *Lexington* and *Dolphin* outsailed their pursuer, and ran in to Morlaix, on the coast of France; but the *Reprisal* only escaped capture by throwing overboard her guns, and Captain Wickes even sawed away his bulwarks to lighten his ship.

The *Lexington* remained at Morlaix until September, when she ran out, and the next day fell in with the British cutter *Alert*, Lieutenant Bazely. A fight ensued, and after two and a half hours' fight, followed by a stern chase of four hours and a second combat of another hour, the *Lexington*, having exhausted all her powder, surrendered.

The continued complaints of the British Government at length compelled the French authorities to order the *Reprisal* to leave Nantes, and Captain Wickes sailed for home in November. The gallant little brig never reached port, however, as she foundered on the Banks of Newfoundland, in December, 1778, and all hands were lost except the cook, who was picked up as the sole survivor of the officers and crew.

CHAPTER IV

THE "HORNET"

THE first vessel in our naval service known as the *Hornet* was a sloop equipped at Baltimore by the Marine Committee in 1775, and armed with ten guns.

Young Joshua Barney, later the distinguished Commodore, had just returned from a voyage to the Mediterranean, where, after the death of his captain, he had assumed command of the ship at the age of sixteen and had brought her safely home. Upon hearing of the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill, the young man's patriotic ardor was aroused, and he at once volunteered his services to Captain William Stone of the *Hornet*, then fitting for sea at Baltimore, and was received on board as master's mate, being second in command.

From the biographical memoir of this gallant officer, prepared by his daughter, we learn that while recruiting their crew, a duty assigned to Barney, a new American flag, sent from Philadelphia by Commodore Esek Hopkins, reached the *Hornet*, and this, the first flag of the young nation that had then been seen in Maryland, was hoisted by Barney at sunrise, to the music of drum and fife, upon a staff planted by the young officer at the door of his rendezvous. A crowd was attracted by

the sight of the new flag, and before sunset Barney had enlisted a full crew for the *Hornet*.

Toward the end of November, 1775, the *Hornet*, with the schooner *Wasp*, 8, in company, left the Patapsco to join Commodore Hopkins's squadron in the Delaware, and these were the first regular cruisers of the new government to get to sea.

Evading the enemy's cruisers, the *Hornet* joined the squadron under Cape Henlopen, at the mouth of the Delaware, where the fleet included the *Alfred* (flagship), 34 guns; *Columbus*, 28; brigs *Cabot*, 14, and *Andrew Doria*, 14; with the sloops *Providence*, 12, and *Fly*, 8 (tender). On the 17th of February the Commodore sailed to the southward, the island of Abaco having been designated as the place of rendezvous. The result of this descent upon New Providence has already been related in the story of the *Alfred*.

On the second day after sailing the *Fly* came into collision with the *Hornet*, carrying away the head of her mainmast and her boom. By this accident the *Hornet* was temporarily disabled and separated from the fleet, and the next morning not one of her consorts was in sight. Repairing damages as best they could, the little vessel made the coast of South Carolina, and, after losing a boat and her crew in a vain effort to communicate with the shore, finally worked her way up the coast, reaching the mouth of the Delaware about the first of April.

On taking a pilot, it was learned that the British ship *Roebuck*, 44, was at anchor in the roads, and that her armed tender was cruising about, making prizes of merchant vessels off the capes.

Captain Stone, a Bermudian, with little stomach for fight, stood to the northward, hoping to avoid the

enemy, but before Cape May was sighted they fell in with the *Roebuck's* tender, and, the *Hornet's* guns being housed, the tender bore down on the sloop, thinking she was a coaster. Barney had one of the guns ready to run out and stood by with a lighted match, prepared to give the Englishman a shot, but the Captain ordered him not to fire, as he "had no inclination for shedding blood."

At this unexpected order, Barney so far forgot discipline as to throw the match-staff at his commanding officer, who avoided the missile by a rapid movement, the iron point of the staff sticking in the frame of the poop-house.

By this time the captain of the tender, having discovered that his antagonist was armed and of superior force, sheered off and escaped, to the great disgust of young Barney and the crew of the *Hornet*, who were assured of making her a prize.

The cowardly Captain remained in his cabin, to which he had retired, and the command devolved upon Barney, who took the sloop in by the Cape May channel. A heavy fog set in, however, and the pilot ran the vessel ashore on Egg Island flats, where she knocked her rudder off. For several days the weather continued exceedingly bad and unseasonably cold, and the *Hornet* was in an unmanageable condition. Her provisions were also well-nigh exhausted, and the crew, at the point of mutiny, were only restrained from abandoning the vessel by the personal influence of Barney.

At last the weather cleared, and the young master's mate managed to get the *Hornet* up to Philadelphia, where Captain Stone left the sloop and finally abandoned a career in the navy, for which he was manifestly unfitted.

Barney remained in charge of the *Hornet* until she was put out of commission and laid up, when the young man offering his services to Captain Charles Alexander, of the *Wasp*, they were accepted, and we will later follow the brilliant career of this gallant sailor in the sketch of that vessel's service.

The records of the Navy Department show that the *Hornet* was blown up in Delaware Bay in 1777, while she was in Commodore Saltonstall's squadron, to pervent her from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Early in September, 1804, and shortly after Commodore Barron relieved Commodore Preble in command of the Mediterranean squadron, two small vessels were purchased, one at Trieste, the other at Malta. It was intended to convert them into bombards, but, two bomb-ketches arriving from America before the season for action had arrived, the vessel purchased at Malta was converted into a sloop, armed with ten guns, and manned and put under the command of Lieutenant Evans. She was called the *Hornet*, and was the second of her name in our service.

In March, 1805, the *Hornet* and the *Argus* were sent to Bomba, on the coast of Tripoli, to aid General Eaton in the proposed attack upon Derne, which he was about to make in co-operation with Hamet Caramelli, the deposed Bashaw of Tripoli. While cruising, the two vessels fell in with the *Nautilus*, Lieutenant-Commander Dent, and the three vessels took part in the assault upon Derne.

Captain William Eaton, the United States naval agent to the Barbary States, with the sanction of his government, gathered a force of five hundred men of all nations in Egypt, with the intention of reinstating Hamet, who was supposed to be friendly to the Amer-

COMMODORE JOSHUA BARNEY, U.S.N.

From an engraving after a miniature by Isabey

icans. With this force Eaton made an extraordinary march of six hundred miles across the desert of Barca, and appeared before Derne on April 27, 1805. At 2 P.M. that day, the *Hornet* ran in to a battery of eight guns, anchored, got springs on her cables, and at once opened fire. The *Nautilus* and the *Argus*, Lieutenant Isaac Hull, taking up positions farther to the eastward, fired on the town and battery. In about one hour the enemy were driven from the works, and all three of the vessels directed their fire at the beach to clear the way for the advance of Eaton's party on shore.

The Turks made an irregular but spirited defence, keeping up a heavy fire of musketry as their assailants advanced, from behind houses and walls. Lieutenant O'Bannon and Mr. Mann of the Marine Corps, who had been landed with a few marines and a field-piece, stormed the principal works, hauled down the Tripolitan flag, and for the first time in history the Stars and Stripes were hoisted over a fortress in the eastern hemisphere, captured by the combined land and naval forces of the United States.

The enemy were driven out of their works with such precipitation that they left their guns loaded, and O'Bannon at once turned them on the town. Hamet Caramelli having meanwhile effected a lodgement on the other side, the place capitulated, and was occupied by the assailants. In this attack, made by 1200 men against a fortified town defended by over 3000, only 14 of the attacking party were killed and wounded, General Eaton being among the latter.

General Eaton now earnestly pressed Commodore Barron to aid him with supplies and reinforcements, with a view of taking Tripoli in the rear, but the Flag Officer declined to co-operate further in the affair. The

Commodore's decision was severely criticised at the time, but it was the general feeling that the ships of our navy had quite all they could attend to at sea, without weakening or dividing their efforts by operations on shore, the success of which were highly problematical.

A treaty of peace was signed with the Bashaw, June 3, 1805, and the war with Tripoli, ending after an existence of four years, the *Hornet* sailed for Tunis with the fleet, now commanded by Commodore Rodgers, and they anchored in that bay, thirteen sail in all, on August 1st. After active negotiations, satisfactory terms of peace were finally arranged, and a Tunisian ambassador embarked in the *Congress* in September for the United States. Soon after this the *Hornet* was sent home, and she was sold out of the service in 1806 at Charleston, S. C.

The third *Hornet* in our navy was a brig-rigged sloop-of-war, of 440 tons, built in 1805, at a cost of $52,606, a sister ship to the *Wasp*. She was a beautiful and very efficient little craft, constructed after the designs of the vessels of the French navy, and carried an armament of eighteen 32-pound carronades and two long 12's on a flush spar-deck, with neither poop nor top-gallant-forecastle. Her complement was 140 men After the war with the Barbary powers, she was kept in commission on the peace establishment until 1810, when she was rebuilt, converted into a ship, and pierced for two more guns, making her battery eighteen short 32's and two long 12's.

In 1809, while the *Hornet* was commanded by Lieutenant Hunt, William Burrows was transferred to her from the *President* as first lieutenant, and during that cruise by his skill and intrepidity he is said to have

saved the brig in a very severe gale. Four years later, while the gallant Burrows was in command of the *Enterprise*, he was killed early in her action with the British brig *Boxer*.

During the year 1810 the *Hornet* was cruising on our coast in company with the frigate *United States*.

Early in 1811, the *Hornet*, Captain Lawrence, followed the *Constitution* to Europe, where Captain Hull had gone with specie to pay the interest on the Dutch loan. But as our diplomatic relations with England were becoming strained, the *Hornet* was recalled and ordered to report to Commodore Rodgers.

On the 18th of June, 1812, when Congress formally declared war with the King of Great Britain, the squadron of Commodore Rodgers, with the *President* as flagship, was gathered at New York, ready to sail at an hour's notice. On the morning of June 21st, the fleet weighed anchor, passed out by Sandy Hook in the afternoon, and ran off southeast. On the 23d, they sighted a frigate, and a general chase began. The *President* outran the other ships, and about 4 P.M. got within gunshot of the enemy, which proved to be the British frigate *Belvidera*, 36, Captain Richard Byron. Commodore Rodgers opened fire with the starboard-forecastle bow gun, hoping to cripple his antagonist, and the first shot from the gun, pointed by Rodgers in person, struck the chase in the rudder-coat, and drove through the stern frame into the gun-room. The next shot from the main-deck bow gun struck the muzzle of one of the *Belvidera's* stern-chasers, which it damaged. The third shot fired by Commodore Rodgers again struck the stern of the chase, killing two men and wounding five, one a lieutenant. The crew of the *President* were now greatly elated, as it was evident

that a few more such shots would ensure the capture of the chase. But at the fourth shot, fired by Lieutenant Gamble, the gun burst, killing and wounding sixteen of the *President's* men. By the force of the explosion, the forecastle deck was blown up, and Commodore Rodgers was thrown into the air, breaking a leg by the fall. During the pause in the firing caused by this accident, the *Belvidera* opened from four stern guns, and one shot plunging on the *President's* deck killed a midshipman and two men.

It would seem that at this point in the chase, possibly from Commodore Rodgers being temporarily disabled, bad judgment was displayed in handling the *President*. Instead of continuing the stern chase, she bore up and fired her port broadside, cutting the *Belvidera's* rigging slightly, but meanwhile losing ground. These tactics she repeated three times, but her broadside fire was ineffectual, although James says she was within four hundred yards of the *Belvidera*.

The English ship kept up a very galling fire from her stern guns, firing three hundred shots, the crew, meanwhile, with the utmost coolness, repairing the damage to her rigging caused by the *President's* fire. The *Congress*, having crept up nearly within range of the *Belvidera*, opened fire with her bow-chasers, but the shot fell short.

As evening closed in, the *Belvidera* began lightening ship by cutting away her anchors, throwing overboard her boats, and starting fourteen tons of water. Thus lightened, she drew ahead, and, altering her course to east by south, she set her starboard studdingsails, and by 7 P.M. she was out of gunshot of the *President*, and escaped into Halifax a few days later, carrying the news of the declaration of war by the United States.

On July 17th, less than a month later, this same frigate *Belvidera*, as one of a squadron of four heavy ships, had the pleasure of turning the tables on the Americans, when for seventy hours she followed the *Constitution* in a chase which, owing to Hull's fertility of device, proved fruitless.

The mortification of having the *Belvidera* escape when she was apparently so near capture was not the only unfortunate feature of this episode. Had the American fleet not been drawn to the northward by the chase they would in all probability have captured the Jamaica plate-fleet they were in search of, the *Thalia* and her convoy having at noon of the same day passed within a few miles of the position of Commodore Rodgers's squadron at the time they started in pursuit of the *Belvidera*. And although Rodgers followed their trail, made by cocoanut shells and orange peels thrown overboard from the West Indiamen, until he was within a day's sail of the English Channel, he failed to come up with his quarry, and reluctantly returned to Boston, having captured seven merchant vessels and recaptured one American vessel during the cruise.

On July 9th, the *Hornet* made prize of a British privateer in latitude 45° 30′ N., and longitude 23° W., and that was the most important capture of the cruise.

On September 15, 1812, Captain William Bainbridge, who was then one of the oldest officers of his rank in the service, was transferred from the *Constellation*, fitting for sea at Washington, and, relieving Captain Hull, hoisted his broad pennant on board the *Constitution* at Boston. The *Essex*, 32, Captain Porter, then in the Delaware, and the *Hornet*, Captain Lawrence, were attached to his squadron.

The *Constitution* and *Hornet* sailed on October 27th, making their first stop at the island of Fernando de Noronha, where the ships watered, and on December 13th, they appeared off San Salvador, Brazil, where the *Hornet* was sent inside with letters for Henry Hill, Esq., the United States Consul, and to arrange for getting stores.

Captain Lawrence found in the harbor the British packet *Fox* and the sloop-of-war *Bonne Citoyenne*, 18, Captain Green. The latter ship was ready to sail for England, having on board a very large amount of specie. After the fashion of the day, a fashion adopted by Captain Broke a year later, when he sent in his challenge to the *Chesapeake* in Boston Harbor, Captain Lawrence forwarded to Captain Green, through our consul, a formal challenge to a combat between the *Bonne Citoyenne* and the *Hornet*, both vessels being of equal size and armament, the difference, if any, being rather in favor of the Englishman.

Bainbridge not only approved of this challenge, but gave his word of honor that he would keep out of gunshot with the *Constitution*, and would under no circumstances take part in the action if it could be arranged. But Captain Green discreetly declined to take up the gage of battle, professing to believe that Bainbridge would not keep to his promise in the event of victory going with the English ship.

Upon that, Bainbridge, on December 26th, stood off to sea thirty miles, hoping that Captain Green might come out when the *Hornet* was alone. Although this hope was frustrated, fortune favored the always lucky *Constitution*, for on the 29th she fell in with the frigate *Java*, and sunk her after two hours' engagement, without losing a spar, going into action with her three

royal-yards across and coming out of it with them all in their places.

On January 13th, while the *Hornet* was still blockading the *Bonne Citoyenne*, and her commander was sending in a succession of letters to Captain Green, urging him to come out and fight, Captain Lawrence came uncomfortably near losing his own ship. Late in the afternoon a sail was sighted, which proved to be the British ship *Montagu*, 74, sent out to convoy the *Bonne Citoyenne*. The *Hornet* at once sought refuge in the harbor, and as the *Montagu* did not fetch in until late evening, Captain Lawrence availed himself of the darkness to stand out into the offing, a manœuvre he effected unobserved, and thus escaped without molestation from his formidable enemy.

The *Hornet* stood to the northward and eastward, shaping her course for Pernambuco. During the run down the coast she made a few prizes, one the American merchant ship *William*, captured by the *Java* a few days before her fight with the *Constitution*, another the brig *Resolution*, with $25,000 specie on board. Finding this vessel a dull sailer, Lawrence removed her treasure and crew to the *Hornet* and burned the prize.

On February 24th, while off the mouth of the Demerara River, a brig was sighted to leeward, and the *Hornet* started inshore in chase until she ran into quarter less five fathoms. The chase showed English colors, and, having all the appearance of being a man-of-war, Lawrence determined to attack her. While beating around the Carabana bank, which lay between the *Hornet* and the strange brig, another sail was made on the weather quarter, evidently edging down on the *Hornet*. Lawrence, however, continued working to windward in pursuit of his first chase, until 4.20 P.M.,

when the second vessel showed English colors, and was made out to be a large man-of-war brig.

The *Hornet* was at once cleared for action and the crew went to quarters, the American brig being kept close to the wind to gain the weather-gage, the enemy running free. At 5.10, feeling assured that he could weather the Englishman, Captain Lawrence broke out his colors and tacked. The two vessels were now standing toward each other, both close by the wind, the *Hornet* on the starboard and the enemy on the port tack.

At 5.25 they passed each other within half-pistol-shot, delivering their batteries as the guns bore. The Englishman suffered severely in the hull from this fire, while the *Hornet* was untouched, save aloft, where one man was killed in the mizzentop by a round shot, two were wounded in the maintop, and, strange to say, her pennant was cut off by a deflected shot.

As the Englishman cleared the *Hornet's* stern he put his helm hard up, intending to ware short round and rake with his starboard guns, but Lawrence saw the manœuvre, and immediately imitated it, bringing the *Hornet* down on the enemy's quarter, where she closed, pouring in such a terrific fire that the English captain was killed, with many of his crew, and within fourteen minutes after the first shot, the Englishman not only lowered his ensign, but at once hoisted it in the fore-rigging as a signal of distress, and at 5.40 P.M. his main-mast fell.

Lieut. J. T. Shubrick, who was sent on board to take possession, soon returned with the information that the prize was H. B. M. sloop-of-war *Peacock*, 20, Captain Peake, and that she was fast sinking, having already six feet of water in her hold.

Lawrence at once anchored and despatched Mr. Connor, his third lieutenant, and Midshipman B. Cooper with boats, with orders to take out the wounded, to anchor the prize, and, if possible, to save the vessel. Every exertion was made to that end; the *Peacock's* guns were thrown overboard, the shotholes at the water-line were plugged, the pumps were rigged, and recourse was even had to bailing. In the confusion attendant upon this scene, when friends and foes were striving to keep the brig above water, and while the boats of the *Hornet* were absent, four of the English crew lowered the *Peacock's* stern boat, and escaped unobserved to the shore.

All efforts to save the prize, however, were of no avail, for suddenly the brig lurched and then settled in five and a half fathoms of water, carrying down with her three of the *Hornet's* and nine of the *Peacock's* crew, who were below. As her masts remained above water, four of the English sailors saved their lives by running up into the foretop. The launch floated from the *Peacock's* deck as she went down, and a number of the crew scrambled into the boat, but as they were without oars, they were forced to paddle with pieces of boards toward the *Hornet*, until they were taken off by one of her cutters.

In this brief engagement the captain of the *Peacock* and seven men were killed and thirty-three wounded. The *Hornet* had one killed and two wounded, beside two badly burned by the explosion of a cartridge. She was also a good deal cut up aloft, had one shot through the foremast, and the bowsprit was hit. By nine o'clock that night, however, new sails had been bent, the boats were stowed, the ship was cleared, and the *Hornet* was ready again for action, if the brig inshore, which was

the *Espiegle*, 18, should decide to come out and attack her.

The *Hornet* in this fight had 135 men fit for duty. Her complement was 150, of whom 8 were absent in a prize and 7 were on the sick list, as Lieutenant Connor reports. The *Peacock's* crew was 134, but 4 were absent in a prize, and but 122 were fit for action, by the report of Lieut. F. W. Wright of that ship.

For some unexplained reason, the *Peacock* had lately changed her broadside 32-pound carronades for 24's, while the *Hornet* had 32's; but as the American ship was uninjured in her hull in this engagement, it is difficult to see what difference it would have made in the result if the *Peacock's* metal had been six pounds heavier. This victory, like most of those during the War of 1812, must be attributed to the greater accuracy of firing displayed by the American seamen, and to the skill of our naval commanders in handling their ships.

At two o'clock the next morning Captain Lawrence got under way and stood to the northward and westward under easy sail. Finding that he had now 277 souls on board, including the crew of the prize brig *Resolution*, which he had taken, and of the American brig *Hunter*, a prize to the *Peacock*, and that he was short of water and provisions, he determined to return home. The allowance of water was reduced to three pints to a man, fore and aft, and the *Hornet* ran through the West Indies, anchored at Holmes Hole, Martha's Vineyard, March 19th, and came through Long Island Sound to New York without meeting an enemy.

Captain Lawrence was received with great enthusiasm in New York. Congress granted him a medal and a sword of honor, votes of thanks were tendered him by the legislatures of several States, and he was pro-

CAPTAIN JAMES LAWRENCE, U.S.N.

From an engraving of the painting by Alonzo Chappel

moted and, by sad mischance, transferred to the command of the ill-fated frigate *Chesapeake*.

After their arrival in New York the officers of the *Peacock* published a card, expressing their high appreciation of the manner in which they had been treated. "We ceased," they said, "to consider ourselves prisoners; and everything that friendship could dictate was adopted by you and the officers of the *Hornet* to remedy the inconvenience we would otherwise have experienced from the unavoidable loss of the whole of our property and clothes, owing to the sudden sinking of the *Peacock*." The day after the fight the crew of the *Hornet* bought with their own money from the purser's stores two shirts, a blue jacket, and a pair of trousers for each survivor of the *Peacock's* crew, as these men had also lost their clothing by the sudden sinking of their ship.

This was in direct contrast to the infamous treatment that Americans had received on board the British ship. Three of the *Peacock's* crew were found to be impressed Americans, one of them being a relative of the wife of Captain Lawrence. Another, Richard Thompson, of New Paltz, Ulster County, New York, testified under oath that he was taken from a merchant ship in 1810 by a press-gang from the *Peacock*, and had not been allowed to write to his friends. When these three men heard of the war with the United States they asked Captain Peake to treat them as prisoners of war. For "this audacity" the men were put in irons for twenty-four hours, then taken on deck, stripped, "tied, and flogged each one a dozen and a half lashes and put to duty."

As the action with the *Hornet* came on these Americans again asked to be excused from fighting against

their flag, but Captain Peake ordered them to be driven to their guns, and the marines were directed to keep an especial watch on them and to shoot them at the first sign of flinching; and as it chanced, one of these unfortunate men was actually killed by the fire of his own countrymen.

The relative force of the two combatants was:

	Tonnage	Guns	Broadside Weight of Metal	Men	Loss
Hornet.....	480	20	279	135	3
Peacock.....	477	20	210	122	38

James, however, states the crew of the *Hornet* was 162.

On the 24th of May, 1813, the *Hornet*, then under command of Master-Commandant Biddle, proceeded to sea from New York by way of Long Island Sound, in company with the *United States*, Commodore Decatur, and the recently captured *Macedonian*, Captain Jacob Jones.

On June 1st, a British 74 was discovered off New London, and sail was at once made for her; but soon the remainder of the British squadron hove in sight, coming out from behind Montauk Point, and as two 74's, a razee, and a frigate was an irresistible force for the American fleet to contend with, Commodore Decatur ran into New London, through Fisher's Island Sound, after giving the razee a few shots from his stern-chasers.

As there was reason to fear an attack in force, Decatur moved the *United States* and *Macedonian* five miles above the town to the mouth of the Thames, leaving the *Hornet* under the guns of Forts Trumbull and Griswold as a guard-ship.

The British established a close blockade of the Amer-

ican ships, their squadron being under command of Sir Thomas Hardy in the *Ramillies*, 74. Hardy had been Nelson's favorite captain, and the great admiral died in his arms at Trafalgar.

During the weary seventeen months that the three ships were shut up in New London harbor, Robert Fulton submitted the plan of a novel vessel of war to Decatur, which he thus describes:

NEW LONDON, January 3d, 1814.

We, the undersigned, have this day examined the model and plans of a vessel of war, submitted to us by Robert Fulton, to carry 24 guns, twenty-four and thirty-two pounders, and use red hot shot, to be propelled by steam at the speed of from four to five miles an hour, without the aid of wind or tide. The properties of which vessel are:

That without masts or sails, she can move with sufficient speed; that her machinery being guarded, she cannot be crippled; that her sides are so thick as to be impenetrable to every kind of shot—and in a calm or light breeze, she can take choice of position or distance from an enemy.

Considering the speed which the application of steam has already given to heavy floating bodies, we have full confidence, that should such a vessel move only four miles an hour, she could, under favorable circumstances, which may always be gained over enemies' vessels in our ports, harbours, bays and sounds, be rendered more formidable to an enemy than any kind of engine hitherto invented.

And in such a case she would be equal to the destruction of one or more 74's, or of compelling her or them to depart from our waters. We therefore give it as our decided opinion that it is among the best interests of the United States, to carry this plan into immediate execution.

(Signed) STEPHEN DECATUR,
J. JONES,
J. BIDDLE.

S. Putnam Waldo, author of the *Life and Character of Stephen Decatur*, written in 1821, says in comment:

> It is to be regretted that this novel floating engine of destruction had not been in readiness to test its power upon the Royal Navy of Britain in the second war; and although a third one is to be deprecated, it is ardently hoped by every lover of the Republic that in a future war with that or any other power, such engines, or some others, may protect our ports, harbours, bays and sounds from the depredation of every hostile intruder.

How little either Robert Fulton or Stephen Decatur could have imagined that within little more than fourscore years the navy of the United States would be largely made up of iron-clad monsters of from ten to fifteen thousand tons, propelled solely by steam-power at the rate of fifteen to twenty-two knots an hour, and armed with guns whose single shot weigh more than all the metal discharged from the entire broadside of a 74-gun ship of their day.

That would have sounded like a fairy tale indeed to those gallant sailors of 1813.

It was during the winter of 1813, while Decatur's fleet was shut up in New London, that the famous "blue light" excitement occurred. On December 21st, the officers and lookouts of the *Hornet* distinctly saw blue lights shown on both sides of the Thames River, and soon after signals, as though in response, were made from one of the enemy's ships.

Decatur reported this fact to the Secretary of the Navy as evidence that information of a supposed attempt of his squadron to go to sea had been communicated to the British fleet by spies on shore. These same signals had also been observed previous to the

9th of December. There was a prolonged correspondence on the subject, but sufficient evidence to convict the townspeople of treasonable communication with the enemy could not be obtained.

The ships of the English fleet off New London were kept busy in warding off the attempts of the ingenious Connecticut patriots to break the blockade. In June, 1813, John Scudder fitted up the coasting schooner *Eagle* as a floating mine, the explosives being covered with naval stores. In a pretended attempt to run the blockade, the schooner fell into the hands of the enemy, her crew escaping on shore. Soon after, the clockwork attachment ignited the mine and the *Eagle* blew up, killing and wounding a British lieutenant and ten men. Later a Norwich man invented a submarine boat by which it was claimed he three times passed under the *Ramillies*, and nearly succeeded in blowing her up. After that, Commodore Hardy caused a cable to be passed under the keel of his ship every two hours, and he notified the authorities that if they persisted in these attempts he would burn all the towns on the Sound.

As the time hung heavily on the hands of both the blockaders and the blockaded an endeavor was made to enliven the time by a naval tournament. A certain Captain Moran, an American, who had been captured by the British and was on board the *Ramillies*, was in conversation with Sir Thomas Hardy, when the Commodore remarked, that now, while two frigates were off New London of equal force with the *United States* and *Macedonian*, he should have no objection to a meeting taking place, but that he could not allow the challenge to come from the British commanders. Soon after this conversation Captain Moran was paroled, and came on shore, and without knowing Commodore

Decatur, mentioned the circumstance in his hearing. Decatur, with characteristic impetuosity, immediately despatched Captain Biddle in a flag of truce, with a challenge from the American commanders. The crews of the *United States* and *Macedonian* were called to quarters and laconically addressed. Commodore Decatur said:

> Officers and seamen—You will shortly be called upon again to try your skill and valour. This ship and his Britannic Majesty's ship *Endymion* of equal force will speedily try their strength. You are accustomed to victory, and you will not tarnish the glory you have already won. I have no fears for the result.

The ardent yet modest Captain Jones addressed his officers and seamen nearly as follows: "My lads, the *Macedonian* was once conquered by American tars, and she will soon have an opportunity to gain a victory herself. You have not forgotten the sloop-of-war *Frolic*, and you will shortly be introduced to the frigate *Statira*. My lads, our cruise will be a short and I trust a very profitable one." Three hearty cheers were given in response to these addresses.

Commodore Hardy, by signals, called the commanders of the *Endymion* and *Statira* on board the *Ramillies*, and modestly said to them: "Gentlemen, here are two letters for you; it rests altogether with you to decide the matter." Captain Stackpole answered: "'Pon honour, sir, it is the most acceptable letter I ever received." Captain Hope of the *Endymion*, however, was less self-confident.

All was animation in the frigates *United States* and *Macedonian*. The officers and seamen were anxious to be led immediately into the contest, when lo! the Brit-

ish sloop-of-war *Borer* came in to New London with a flag of truce, and informed Captain Decatur that the invitation had been finally declined!

An extended correspondence upon this subject followed between Commodores Decatur and Hardy and Captain Stackpole, but it all came to naught in the end.

Shortly after this business was broken off a verbal challenge passed between Captain Biddle of the *Hornet* and the commander of the *Loup Cervier*, as the British had renamed the *Wasp* after her capture,—Biddle had been first lieutenant of the *Wasp* when she was taken by the British,—but this challenge, like the previous one, was without results, as the British commander declined to accede to Decatur's proposition: "The *Hornet* shall meet the *Loup-Cervier*, under a mutual and satisfactory pledge, that neither ship shall receive any additional officers or men, but shall go into action with their original crews, respectively."

Finding the British blockade so close, Captain Jones and the crew of the *Macedonian* were sent in the autumn to reinforce the squadron under Commodore Chauncey on Lake Ontario, while Commodore Decatur was transferred with the crew of the *United States* to the *President* at New York, the *President's* captain and crew going to the *Guerrière* at Philadelphia.

An opportunity at last presenting itself on the night of November 18, 1814, Biddle ran out with the *Hornet*, and, skilfully eluding the vigilant watch of the British squadrons, he passed through their ships off New London and Sandy Hook and joined the American fleet at New York.

Two months later, on the 21st of January, 1815, a strong northwesterly gale set in, and that night Captain

Biddle determined to take advantage of the heavy weather and slip out by the English fleet. Under storm canvas and accompanied by the *Peacock* and the brig *Tom Bowline*, the *Hornet* passed the bar at daylight of the 22d, the British frigates lying to in the southeast being plainly visible.

Unaware of the capture of the *President* by the British fleet seven days before, the three little vessels made the best of their way toward Tristan d'Acunha, the rendezvous Decatur had appointed for a cruise in the East Indies. A few days out the *Hornet* parted company with her consorts in a chase, reaching the island on the 23d of March, and was about to anchor off the north point when a sail was made in the southeast steering west.

This proved to be the British brig-sloop-of-war *Penguin*, Captain Dickenson. She mounted nineteen guns: sixteen 32-pound carronades, two chase guns, and a shifting forecastle carronade. She was new the previous September, carried 132 men, and had been despatched on special service by Vice-Admiral Charles Tyler to capture the heavy American privateer *Young Wasp*, that had been making great havoc among homeward-bound Indiamen. Special instructions had been given to Captain Dickenson to be sure to get close enough to the privateer before she became alarmed, so the *Penguin* approached the *Hornet* head on to conceal her broadside.

When the strange sail was sighted by a man aloft, Captain Biddle was just clewing up his topsails, but he at once sheeted them home and made all sail to the westward in chase. The wind was fresh S.S.W., and the *Penguin* was to windward, but without manœuvring the *Hornet* hove to, to let her antagonist close, then

filled her maintopsail and yawed, wearing occasionally to prevent being raked.

At 1.41, being within musket-shot, the *Penguin* hauled to the wind on the starboard tack, hoisted a St. George ensign, and fired a gun. Upon this challenge, the *Hornet* luffed up on the same tack, broke out her flag, and the action began with heavy broadsides. The two vessels kept up a sharp fire for fifteen minutes, gradually closing, until Captain Dickenson put his helm up and ran the *Hornet* aboard on the starboard side, the *Penguin's* bowsprit coming in between the main- and mizzen-rigging of the American, and projecting over her deck.

As the ships closed, Captain Dickenson fell mortally wounded, but Lieutenant McDonald made a gallant effort to lead his men on board the *Hornet*, an effort that failed through the unwillingness of the British sailors to follow their brave leader. "We tried," said Lieutenant McDonald, afterward, "but found the men rather backward,—and so, you know, we concluded to give it up." The American crew had been called to repel boarders, but, finding no opponents, they were preparing in their turn to board the *Penguin* when they were recalled by Captain Biddle. A heavy sea was running, and as the *Hornet* forged ahead, the *Penguin's* bowsprit carried away her mizzen-shrouds, stern davits, and spanker boom, and she swung around on the American's port quarter, where neither ship could bring her broadside guns to bear. Afterward the *Penguin's* foremast fell on board the *Hornet*, covering the port guns of the American brig so they could not be used.

Captain Biddle now wore his ship round to bring the starboard battery into play, when one of the English officers called out something which Biddle understood

to be "surrender," and, directing his marines to cease firing, he jumped up on the taffrail. At that moment two marines on the *Penguin's* forecastle, not thirty feet distant, fired at the American captain, one of the balls inflicting a severe wound in the neck. An immediate volley of musketry from the *Hornet* killed both the marines, and as the ship drew ahead the *Penguin's* foremast went overboard, breaking her bowsprit short off. The *Hornet* at once wore, bringing a fresh broadside to bear, and at 2.02, as she rounded to, a score of men sprang up on the forecastle of the *Penguin*, holding up their hands and shouting that they had struck. This was twenty-two minutes after the first gun was fired. The *Penguin's* hull was riddled, her foremast and bowsprit gone, her mainmast tottering, and most of her starboard guns dismounted, while she had lost one third of her men, 14 killed and 28 wounded, or 42 in all.

The officers of the *Penguin* relate that during the action a 32-pound shot came in through their larboard after-port, carried away six legs, killed the powder-boy of the division, capsized the opposite gun on the starboard side, passed through the port, and after this devastation, "sunk in sullen silence to the bottom."

The *Hornet* had not been struck by a round shot in the hull, nor was a mast or spar materially injured, although the sails and rigging were a good deal cut. Her loss was 2 killed, 9 wounded; 11 in all.

The comparative force of the two vessels was:

	Ton	Guns	Broadside Weight of Metal	Crew	Loss	
Hornet.....	480	20	279	142	12	Time 22 minutes.
Penguin.....	477	19	274	132	42	

The *Penguin* was so cut up that after taking the stores out of her Captain Biddle ordered her to be de-

stroyed. While this was being done, the *Peacock* and *Tom Bowline* hove in sight, and the *Penguin's* prisoners were sent to Rio de Janeiro in the *Tom Bowline* as a cartel, while the *Hornet* and *Peacock* continued their cruise to the East Indies.

On April 27th, in lat. 38° 30′ S. and long. 33° E., the two vessels sighted what they believed to be an Indiaman, and the crew were greatly excited, congratulating themselves upon the rich prize that awaited them; some, it is said, declaring they would have the decks carpeted with India silks. But the *Peacock*, which was well ahead of the *Hornet*, signalled "a ship-of-the-line," and at once made sail to escape. Captain Biddle soon found that the enemy was indeed a 74-gun ship, which proved to be the *Cornwallis*, carrying the flag of Admiral Sir George Burleton, K.C.B. The *Peacock*, being a swift ship, soon escaped, but the *Hornet* found her enemy quite as fast as herself and equally weatherly. Captain Biddle hauled close on the wind, but by 9 P.M., finding the *Cornwallis* was gaining on him, he threw overboard twelve tons of kentledge, a quantity of shot, some heavy spars, and the sheet-anchor and cable. By 2 A.M. the enemy had drawn forward of the lee beam, when the *Hornet* tacked to the westward, the enemy immediately following. At seven o'clock the Englishman hoisted colors and commenced firing, the shot actually passing over the American.

Captain Biddle now threw overboard six of his guns, his launch, and other anchors and cables, and by nine o'clock, the wind having fallen, he had the pleasure of finding for the first time that he was gaining on his pursuer. By eleven o'clock, the enemy again closing, Biddle threw overboard all his guns but one, the remaining boats, the spare spars, and everything about

the decks, and then began cutting up the topgallant forecastle and throwing it into the sea.

The private journal kept by one of the *Hornet's* officers says:

> At this time the shot and shells were whistling about our ears and not a person on board had the most distant idea that there was a possibility of escape. We all packed our things and waited until the enemy's shot would compel us to heave to and surrender. Many of our men had been impressed and imprisoned for years in their horrible service and hated them and their nation with the most deadly animosity, while the rest of the crew, horror-struck with the narration of the sufferings of their shipmates who had been in the power of the English, and now equally flushed with rage, joined heartily in execrating the present authors of our misfortune. Captain Biddle mustered the men and told them he was pleased with their conduct during the chase, and hoped still to perceive that propriety of conduct which had always marked their character and that of the American tar generally; that we might soon expect to be captured, etc., etc. Not a dry eye was to be seen at the mention of the capture of the poor little *Hornet*.

By noon the *Cornwallis*, having closed the gap within a mile, began to fire, her shot flying far beyond the *Hornet*. Fortunately but three struck her. One passed through the jib, another plunged on deck and, glancing, lodged forward, and a third hulled her. Still the gallant Biddle held on, determined not to give up his ship while there was a ray of hope.

About 2 P.M. the breeze freshened and worked to the westward, bringing the *Hornet* more to windward, and being so light she began to make a perceptible gain over her pursuer. By sunset the Englishman was a league astern, and by daylight he was nearly hull down. At

half-past nine the *Cornwallis* took in her studdingsails and hauled off to the eastward, and the *Hornet*—or what was left of her—was saved.

In sorry case, with but one gun, and neither anchor, cable, nor boat, the proud victor over the *Peacock* and the *Penguin* made the best of her way to St. Salvador, where Captain Biddle heard the news of peace between Great Britain and the United States, and, after refitting, sailed for New York, where he arrived on the 30th of July, 1815, having fought and won the last regular action of the war at sea.

Upon his arrival, Commander Biddle learned that he had been promoted to the rank of Post Captain while at sea. The citizens of New York gave him a state dinner, his native city, Philadelphia, presented him with a service of plate, and Congress awarded him a gold medal.

Biddle asked for a court of inquiry to examine into his action in sacrificing the battery and equipment of the *Hornet*. This request was granted, but the court not only acquitted him of all blame, but highly commended the skill that had saved the *Hornet* from capture.

James Biddle was born in Philadelphia in 1783, and obtained a midshipman's warrant in 1800, at the age of seventeen; he was on board the *Philadelphia* when she was wrecked off the coast of Tripoli, in 1803, and was held in captivity during the war with the Barbary States. After his release he was promoted to a lieutenancy and assigned to the *Wasp*, and was on board her when she captured the *Frolic*, October 13, 1812. He was placed in command of the prize, with orders to make for some southern port of the United States; but while the two vessels were hastily repairing damages

the *Poictiers*, a British 74, appeared, and as neither vessel was in a condition to escape they were both captured, and Biddle was carried in to Bermuda, where he remained until he was exchanged in March, 1813.

On reaching home, Mr. Biddle was promoted to Master Commandant and placed in charge of a gunboat flotilla in the Delaware, and from there was transferred to the *Hornet*, then blockaded in New London.

After the War of 1812, Biddle was almost continuously on duty. In 1817, while in command of the Pacific squadron, Commodore Biddle formally took possession of Oregon in the name of the United States. In 1826, he represented his government in the negotiation of a treaty of commerce with the Ottoman Empire. From 1838 to 1842, he was Governor of the Naval Asylum, Philadelphia, and at his suggestion, James K. Paulding, Secretary of the Navy, sent all unemployed midshipmen to the Naval Asylum. This was really the foundation of the United States Naval Academy, afterward removed to Annapolis, Md.

In 1845, while flag-officer of the East India squadron, Biddle negotiated the first treaty ever made between the United States and China, and he afterward landed in Japan, being the first American naval officer to visit that empire. During the Mexican War he was in command on the coast of California, having come over from the East Indies in the *Columbus* in 1847. Commodore Biddle returned to the United States in 1848, and died October 1, 1848, in his native city.

In 1821, while the *Hornet*, Captain R. Henley, was stationed on the coast of Africa, aiding in the suppression of the slave trade, she captured the *Moscow*, a noted slaver and pirate. The *Hornet* sailed on her last cruise, February 5, 1829, under command of Master

MEDAL AWARDED COMMODORE JAMES BIDDLE BY CONGRESS, 1815

Commandant Otho Norris, and was lost off Tampico with all hands. It was supposed she foundered in a heavy gale.

There was also a schooner *Hornet*, 5 guns, in the service from 1813 to 1820. She was purchased at Georgetown, in 1813, for $2200, and was employed principally on bays and rivers as a despatch-vessel, under Lieutenants Wilkinson, Ramage, and Zantzinger. She was broken up in 1820.

The fifth *Hornet* in our navy was originally Mr. Henry M. Flagler's steel steam yacht *Alicia*, purchased, with many others, for use as a despatch-boat in the Spanish War, in March, 1898. She was of 302 tons, 160 feet long, 24 feet beam, and 13 feet 5 inches deep, and was armed with a battery of 6- and 1-pounders and a Maxim automatic gun. The *Hornet* was commanded by Lieutenant James H. Helm, who made a record for his little vessel in the operations on the coast of Cuba worthy of her illustrious name.

April 25, 1898, the *Hornet* joined the North Atlantic squadron off Havana. On May 6th, in company with the torpedo-boat *Dupont*, Lieut. S. S. Wood, the *Hornet* had an engagement with a battery at the entrance to Matanzas harbor, which they silenced; and also drove a detachment of Spanish troops, with considerable loss, from a blockhouse seven miles eastward of the battery.

On June 15th, the *Hornet* joined the division off Rebecca Shoal Light, under command of Captain Henry C. Taylor in the *Indiana*, and aided in the convoy of General Shafter's transports from that point to Daiquiri, as well as in the arduous duty of disembarking the troops on the Cuban coast.

On July 10th, the *Hornet* accompanied the *Hist* and

Wompatuck from Cape Cruz in a cable-cutting expedition in the San Juan Channel. Getting under way early on the morning of July 11th, the three vessels began dragging along the muddy bottom in sixty feet of water until Lieutenant Young, in the *Hist*, twice hooked the cable, but the grapplings were so light that both times it slipped off, and when endeavoring to raise it the third time the dragging line parted. Lieutenant Jungen, of the *Wompatuck*, after an hour's hard work, succeeded in grappling the cable for the fourth time, and, signalling the *Hornet* for assistance, Lieutenant Helm got a five-inch hawser attached to the cable, which was hove up to the *Wompatuck's* side, when a section two hundred feet long was cut out of it, and the seaward end was then carried out to sea and dropped.

On the morning of June 30th, while cruising off Cape Cruz on the south side of Cuba, the *Hornet* was joined by the *Wompatuck*, Lieutenant Jungen, and the *Hist*, Lieutenant Lucien Young, the latter being the senior officer of the three lieutenants. As Lieutenant Young had received orders from Rear-Admiral Sampson to stop the inside traffic west of Cape Cruz and in Manzanillo, he first despatched the *Hornet* inshore to take possession of a schooner, and, that accomplished, the three little vessels formed in column, and at 8.15 A.M. steamed in through the Azuraza Pass toward the harbor of Manzanillo.

Upon turning the point that opened out Niguero Bay, a Spanish gunboat was discovered at anchor, under cover of the blockhouses occupied by a body of Spanish troops. Finding there was not water enough for the *Wompatuck* to enter the bay, Lieutenant Young ordered her to remain in the channel to prevent the escape of the gunboat behind the key. Meanwhile, the

Hist and *Hornet* steamed into the harbor, and as soon as their guns could be brought to bear they opened with their 3- and 6-pounders, which was replied to by the Spaniards at 1500 yards. The water was so shallow that both the American vessels got aground, but they fortunately succeeded in backing off, keeping up their fire meanwhile upon the enemy, and the third shot from the *Hist* struck the Spanish gunboat's stern and silenced her after machine-guns.

By this time a perfect fusillade of small arms was opened upon the Americans from a wooded point four hundred yards distant; but these sharpshooters were speedily silenced by well-directed fire from the *Hist's* Maxim gun, supplemented by the 3- and 6-pounders of the *Hornet*.

The Spanish gunboat, finding she could not escape from her enemies, steamed across the harbor in shoal water, and under cover of the shore, keeping up a continuous fire from her 3-pounder. She was repeatedly hit by shots from the American vessels, and at last, in a crippled condition, dropped behind one of the smaller keys, which, however, did not conceal her, and a shot from the *Hist* striking her amidships, she blew up. Having thus completed the destruction of the gunboat, the American vessels withdrew through Balandras Channel, shelling a sloop loaded with soldiers as they passed out, and driving them on shore for shelter. During this brisk engagement the *Hornet* fired forty-seven 6-pounder shells.

The *Hist*, *Wompatuck*, and *Hornet* now passed to the left of Giva Keys, and opened up the harbor of Manzanillo, where they discovered nine vessels stretched across the harbor in a crescent formation. These included a large torpedo-boat on the right in entering, a

good-sized gunboat on the left, with three smaller gunboats in the middle, all armed with machine-guns and 3- and 6-pounders. On the right the line was flanked by a big smooth-bore gun on Caimanera Point, and on the left by four pontoons armed with 6-inch smooth-bore guns. In the rear this line was supported by a heavy battery of field artillery on the water front, and several large guns in a fort on the hill, while for two miles the shore was lined with soldiers.

Nothing daunted by this imposing array of force, the plucky little American vessels rounded Caimanera Point, headed directly into the harbor, and at 3.20 P.M., when within 1000 yards, first opened fire with their bow guns, and then, putting their helms to starboard, brought their broadside guns into action and passed along the enemy's entire front, pouring in a heavy fire and receiving that of the Spaniards. When opposite the centre of the line, while shells were striking all about the *Hornet*, her main steam-pipe was cut by a shot, and the whole inside of the little vessel was filled with steam, scalding three of the men in the engine-room, two of them seriously. Notwithstanding the helpless condition their ship was now in, the fire of the *Hornet's* battery was not slackened, the men passing ammunition through the steam, and cheering as a shell from one of their 6-pounders was seen to strike and sink one of the small Spanish gunboats, which went down stern first. Another shot from the *Hornet* struck and silenced a second gunboat, and a small Spanish sloop, loaded with soldiers, having approached the port side of the *Hornet* and opened upon her with musketry, a well-aimed shot from a 6-pounder struck the gunboat fairly amidships and sent her to the bottom.

As the *Hornet* was now drifting near the shoals, the

Wompatuck turned, and coming alongside, towed the disabled vessel out of action, both ships keeping up their fire upon the Spanish gunboats, which failed to follow them. In this sharp engagement against a vastly superior force the *Hornet* was struck many times, but had no casualties except the three men scalded. The action lasted forty-five minutes, and although the *Hornet* was disabled ten minutes after the fight began, she used her battery to the very end of the engagement.

On July 18th, the *Hornet* made another and more successful essay at Manzanillo, this time in company with the *Wilmington*, *Helena*, *Scorpion*, *Hist*, *Wompatuck*, and *Osceola*. Entrance was made by the three channels that lead into the harbor, and in two and a half hours three transports, *El Gloria*, *Jose Garcia*, and *El Purissima Concepcion*, were burned and destroyed, the *Ponton*, the harbor guard-ship, was burned and blew up, three gunboats were destroyed, and two driven ashore and disabled. In this fight the *Hornet*, getting closer in than the other vessels, was opened on by the shore batteries, to which she vigorously responded. The *Hornet* fired 429 6-pounder shells, 259 1-pounder, and 60 Hodgkiss shells during this engagement, and suffered no casualties. These affairs are what Admiral Farragut was wont to style "the little elegancies of the profession."

The *Hornet* was constantly engaged in cable-cutting, despatch, and guard duty throughout the war, and at its termination was loaned to the State of North Carolina as a practice vessel for her naval militia.

CHAPTER V

THE "WASP"

THE schooner *Wasp*, as we have seen in the previous chapter, was one of the three vessels purchased by the Marine Committee, in 1775, as a portion of the first fleet fitted out by the Continental Congress and placed under the command of Esek Hopkins. She had been known in the merchant service as the *Falcon*. More fortunate than her companion the *Hornet*, the *Wasp*, under command of Captain Charles Alexander, a Scotchman, and a gallant officer, as he afterward proved himself, took part in the expedition to New Providence, and with the sloop *Providence* covered the landing of the marines when they occupied Fort Montague at the east end of the island.

After leaving the Bahamas on March 17, 1776, the *Wasp* parted company with the homeward-bound fleet, and did not take part in the engagement with the British frigate *Glasgow* in Long Island Sound.

The *Wasp* returned to Philadelphia, and while there young Joshua Barney, having left the *Hornet*, entered on board of her as a volunteer master's mate, under Captain Alexander, who was ordered to convoy clear of the coast a merchant vessel bound to Europe. Having accomplished this duty, the *Wasp* was returning to the Delaware, when Captain Alexander discovered the

British frigates *Roebuck*, 44, and *Liverpool*, 28, lying in the roads.

The *Liverpool* at once got under way and made sail for the *Wasp*, but, having no pilot on board, she ran on a shoal, where she remained until high water, thus enabling the little schooner to escape out of the bay into Cape May Channel, where she found the American brig *Lexington*, Captain Barry, and the ship *Surprise*, Captain Weeks, both as yet ignorant of the close proximity of the English frigates. A few hours later a bark was discovered standing in for the cape with all sail crowded, and the *Liverpool*, which had by this time cleared the shoals, closely pursuing her. She was soon recognized as a vessel anxiously expected in Delaware Bay by the Americans, as she was laden with small arms and ammunition, and preparations were accordingly made by the three vessels to afford her all the assistance in their power. But they had scarcely arranged the means of rendering their co-operation efficient when the *Roebuck* also appeared in full chase. The junction of these two British frigates, of course, destroyed all hope of saving the bark, and she must soon have fallen into the hands of the enemy, had she not chosen what was deemed the lesser evil of running ashore a few miles to the northward of the cape. The Americans, upon perceiving this, at once despatched all their boats and men to assist in taking out the cargo, under a heavy fire from the frigates, which still continued to approach, with the evident design of sending their boats to take possession of her.

Lieutenant Weeks, of the *Surprise*, was killed, and several of the men in the boats were wounded by one of the enemy's shot, but the Americans persevered in their efforts to save the stores until they saw the boats

of the enemy lowered and manned with double their number. Then Captain Barry, who commanded this little expedition, ordered a quantity of powder from the cargo to be thrown loose in the hold, with a billet of burning wood wrapped in the mainsail placed over the hatchway, and then directed a retreat of his party to their several vessels. The design of Captain Barry was merely to destroy the vessel and the remainder of her cargo, to prevent either from being captured by the enemy; and this could not be done with safety to his own boats without so disposing the fire as to leave them time to get beyond the effect of the explosion.

A few minutes after the men from the English boats had boarded the stranded bark, the fire communicated with the loose powder and a tremendous explosion followed, from which not one of the boarders escaped. The destruction was complete, and the loss to the enemy in men and officers must have been great, judging from the number of dead bodies, mangled limbs, gold-laced hats, and other officers' equipments which continued to be thrown up on the shore for many days afterward, for its extent was never otherwise ascertained.

After the American boats had rejoined their respective vessels, the *Wasp* weighed anchor and pursued her course up the bay. This movement was perceived by the *Roebuck* and *Liverpool*, who, with their tender, an armed brig, immediately pursued, determining, no doubt, to punish the *Wasp* for their late discomfiture and loss.

Captain Alexander, finding they gained upon him rapidly, hauled up to the wind and ran in to Wilmington Creek, where he was safe from the pursuit of the frigates and ready for the lighter-draught brig if she should attempt the contest alone. By the time he had an-

chored night had come on, but the next morning he found both the frigates had come to anchor off the mouth of the creek, where he was thus shut up so long as they remained.

The previous day, while pursued by the enemy, Captain Alexander had fallen in with several merchant vessels from Philadelphia, outward bound, in total ignorance of the presence of the enemy. These he spoke and ordered back to Philadelphia, and the returning vessels carrying the information to the city that the enemy's ships were approaching, a number of row-galleys were hastily prepared under the command of Commodore Hazlewood, to meet them. These galleys each carried one heavy gun and fifty men.

By uncommon exertion and activity, the galleys made their appearance off Wilmington Creek at an early hour in the morning, and a brisk cannonading instantly commenced between them and the British ships. Galled by the fire of the galleys, the frigates found themselves under the necessity of weighing anchor, and the gallant commander of the *Wasp* thought this a favorable moment for attempting something that might assist in annoying the foe. His anchor was up in a moment, the sweeps were manned, and the schooner was rowed out of the creek. The enemy's brig tender was lying close under the cover of the guns of the two frigates, but as the attention of the latter seemed to be fully occupied with the galleys, Captain Alexander thought himself justified in making the attempt to board her. No enterprise could have been more daring, but he was well seconded by his young volunteer, Barney, and actually succeeded in carrying her off.

Most luckily for him, at the moment the enemy perceived this bold and unexpected manœuvre and made

a movement to counteract it, the *Roebuck* grounded on the Jersey shore, and the *Liverpool* was thus compelled to come to anchor near her that she might protect her from a probable attack on the part of the galleys.

By this opportune disaster of the enemy, Captain Alexander got safe off with his prize, sent her into a port a few miles below on the Jersey side of the Delaware River, and re-entered Wilmington Creek in triumph a little before nightfall.

The following morning, it was so thick and hazy that Captain Alexander, under the impression that the *Roebuck* was still aground, thought he might be able to pass, under cover of the fog, without being discovered. Getting under way at an early hour, he cleared the mouth of the creek, but at the moment he fancied himself free, the sun burst forth, the fog was dispersed, and he found himself almost aboard of the enemy's ship, which was no longer aground, but lying snugly at anchor, watching his motions. A light breeze, however, enabled him, before the *Roebuck* could weigh her anchor, to shoot a little ahead and take advantage of the wind. The *Roebuck*, again disappointed of her prey, opened her whole broadside upon the active little *Wasp*, with no other effect, however, than to retard her own way and hide the object of her pursuit in the cloud of smoke. The English frigate continued the chase, keeping up a constant fire with her bow guns for nearly an hour, the greater part of the time within half a mile of the *Wasp*, but her shot did little or no mischief, and, by the help of sweeps, sails, and tow-boats, the schooner at length gained sight of the galleys, which had changed their position during the night and were now returning to begin the attack anew.

Captain Alexander, having reached the cover of the galleys, laid his topsail aback and waited to see whether he might be able to afford any assistance. The presence of the *Wasp* turned out in the end to be most fortunate for the Americans.

In the course of this second day's engagement between the galleys and the British ship, which was kept up with considerable spirit until near night, one of the galleys sustained so great a loss in men, that there were not enough left to manage the oars, and she was compelled to give over the combat and drop astern. Barney, who had been watching the action from the *Wasp* with intense interest, perceived her situation, and applied to his captain for permission to volunteer his services, and with a sufficient number of the schooner's crew to re-man the galley and bring her again into action. The permission was readily given, and Barney boarded the crippled galley, brought her once more gallantly into action, and soon had the satisfaction of seeing the frigates retire. They were visibly much cut up, and, having no sea-room for manœuvres, were evidently glad to escape. The galleys followed them as far as Newcastle, giving them an occasional long shot, and then, seeing no chance of again coming up with them, they returned. Barney and his men remained with the galley they had fought so bravely until they delivered her safe in Philadelphia.

The reception of Captain Alexander and his officers was very gratifying, the successful feat of the little *Wasp* was in everybody's mouth, and all the honors acquired in the two days' tilting with the enemy were awarded to them. A few days after his return to Philadelphia, Captain Alexander received from Congress a commission as Captain in the Navy, and was

transferred to the command of the *Delaware*, one of the new ships of twenty-eight guns.

The *Wasp* remained in Commodore Saltonstall's squadron in Delaware Bay until she was blown up the following year to avoid capture by the enemy.

The second *Wasp*, a sloop-of-war of 450 tons, with eighteen guns and a complement of 140 men, built at Washington, D. C., in 1806, at the close of the Tripolitan War, as a sister ship to the *Hornet*, was a beautiful and fast cruiser. She was sent to Europe with despatches to our Ministers in 1809, and, being recalled at the prospective outbreak of hostilities, she refitted at Philadelphia, and sailed from the Delaware, October 13, 1809, under command of Master Commandant Jacob Jones, who was in the frigate *Philadelphia* when she ran on the shoals before Tripoli and was captured.

Captain Jones's orders were to get into the track of the homeward-bound British West-Indiamen; and while running due east the *Wasp* fell into a heavy gale of wind, in which she lost her jib-boom, with two men who were furling the jib.

On the night of the 17th of October, about half-past eleven o'clock, while in latitude 37° North, longitude 65° West, a little eastward of Albemarle Sound, several lights were seen ahead, which proved to be from a small convoy of merchant ships. As the repairs to his jib-boom had not yet been completed, Jones decided not to close until daylight, and meantime worked his ship to windward as much as possible.

In the morning the strangers were discovered to be five merchant vessels, several of them mounting from sixteen to eighteen guns, with a brig-of-war as convoy. The *Wasp* sent down her topgallant-yards, close reefed her topsails, and bore down on the fleet. The English

brig signalled her convoy to make all sail before the wind while she dropped astern to reconnoitre.

At 11 o'clock Jones hoisted his colors, and at 11.32 hailed the stranger, who was then showing Spanish colors; the two ships were running parallel on the starboard tack. The captain of the brig responded by hauling down the Spanish flag, and as he ran up the British ensign he poured in a broadside, accompanied by a volley of musketry at less than sixty yards' distance.

The *Wasp* at once responded, and as the vessels drew nearer, the fire from both was very destructive, the brig delivering three broadsides to the *Wasp's* two. At 11.36 the *Wasp's* maintopmast fell, bringing with it the maintopsail-yard, the spars as they came down lying across the port fore- and foretopsail-braces, thus rendering it impossible to work the head-yards during the action. Three minutes later her gaff and mizzen-topgallantmast were shot away, leaving the *Wasp* almost unmanageable, while to all appearance the enemy was but little injured, having thus far lost only her gaff and head-braces.

The sea was running so heavily that the muzzles of the guns were frequently submerged, and at 11.52 the vessels had come within half pistol-shot. "We must decide this matter at once," said Captain Jones, and he gave orders to wear ship. As the *Wasp* answered her helm and payed off, the collision followed. With a grinding jar she rubbed across the Englishman's bow, the brig's bowsprit coming in between the *Wasp's* main- and mizzenmast, so that it was not necessary to make the vessels fast. As they closed, the Americans loaded their guns with grape and canister and raked the brig, sweeping her deck with every fire.

John Lang of New Brunswick, who at one time had been impressed in the English navy, climbed up on the enemy's bowsprit, and, cutlass in hand, sprang on the deck of the British brig. Lieutenant James Biddle led the boarders, and would have been first on board had not an unlucky midshipman, in seizing his coat-tails to help himself up, pulled the Lieutenant back on the deck. Remounting the hammock netting, Biddle watched a favorable lurch of the vessels and gained the forecastle of the enemy with his men, where a terrible spectacle was presented to them. Scarcely any of the English crew were standing: a lieutenant, bleeding from many wounds, was leaning against the companionway, while a sorely wounded quartermaster clung to the wheel. Every officer was wounded, and two were dead. The decks were strewn with dead and dying, and the water that washed from side to side across the deck, as the brig rolled, was dyed with blood.

The victorious Americans pushed their way through the dead and wounded to the quarter-deck, where the surviving officers dropped their swords in submission as Lieutenant Biddle hauled down the British flag. A few minutes later both masts fell, the mainmast going close to the deck and the foremast about fifteen feet higher. The prize proved to be H. B. M. brig *Frolic*, 22, Captain Thomas Whingates, with a convoy from Honduras bound to London, with a crew of 110 men, of whom 30 were killed and 60 wounded, according to Captain Whingate's official letter. The *Wasp* lost 5 killed and 5 wounded. The crew of the *Wasp* had fired on the downward roll of their ship, and all their shot had told in the *Frolic's* hull, which was terribly cut up, while the brig fired on the upward roll, which accounts for the great damage to the *Wasp's* spars and rigging.

But Captain Jones and his brave crew were not permitted to reap the fruit of their victory, for, while repairing damages and caring for the wounded, the British 74-gun ship *Poictiers* hove in sight, and, running down on the two vessels, seized them both and carried them in to Bermuda, where the British captain released the officers and crew of the *Wasp* on parole. The *Wasp* was taken into the British navy, renamed the *Loup Cervier*, and was subsequently lost at sea.

Upon returning home, the crew of the *Wasp* were received with great demonstrations of joy. Congress voted $25,000 prize money to the officers and crew, a gold medal to Master Commandant Jones, and a silver medal to each of the officers, while the Pennsylvania Legislature awarded a sword of honor to Lieutenant Biddle. Captain Jones was also made an honorary member of the Society of the Cincinnati. Jones was promoted to captain in recognition of this victory, and was ordered to the command of the captured frigate *Macedonian*, 38.

COMPARATIVE FORCE AND LOSS

	Tons	Guns	Lbs.	Crew	Killed	Wounded	Total	Time
Wasp.....	450	18	249	138	5	5	10	43 minutes
Frolic.....	467	22	292	110	30	60	90	

Under the act of January 2, 1813, which authorized the construction of four ships-of-the-line and six heavy frigates, the President was also empowered to cause six sloops-of-war to be laid down. One of these was named the *Wasp*, and was the third of her name in our service. She carried an armament of twenty 32-pound carronades and two long 18's, and a crew of 173 men, all of whom were said to be New Englanders.

On May 1, 1814, the new *Wasp* sailed from Portsmouth, N. H., under command of Captain Johnston Blakely, on a cruise. She ran off the coast without molestation, keeping to the eastward, until, on June 28th, at quarter-past 4 A.M., in latitude 48° 36′ N., longitude 11° 15′ W., in the chops of the English Channel, she sighted two sails a little forward of the lee beam.

The weather was fine, the wind light, and the sea exceedingly smooth. While keeping away in chase, another sail was sighted on the weather beam, when Captain Blakely brought his ship up to the wind to close with this most weatherly of his antagonists.

At ten, the chase showed English colors and began to signal. At noon she repeated her signals and fired a gun. At 1.15 P.M., Captain Blakely, believing he could weather the chase, tacked. The Englishman also tacked, and stood off manœuvring for the weather-gage. The *Wasp* now fired a gun to windward and showed her ensign, and the enemy, a large man-of-war brig, accepted the defiance, and at 2.32 P.M. tacked and hauled down her staysails as the *Wasp* took in her light sails.

At 2.50 Captain Blakely, seeing that his opponent would weather him, made another tack, while the Englishman ran up his flying jib too close, and crept down on the weather quarter of the American, about sixty yards distant, firing his forecastle gun five times into the *Wasp* before she could bring a gun to bear.

This galling fire for eleven minutes from a 12-pounder loaded with round and grape at such short range was borne by the crew of the *Wasp* with the utmost steadiness and subordination. The men stood quietly to their guns until they could be brought to bear and then

served them with a vigor that was shown in the wreck they made of their enemy.

The British captain made a most gallant fight from first to last, and his approach on the *Wasp's* quarter was a very excellent piece of seamanship, but fate and the odds were against him. As the English brig drew ahead, Captain Blakely put his helm down and, luffing up, made a half-board, firing from aft forward as his guns bore. As the water was smooth and the fire was deliberate every shot told with terrible effect.

The enemy now kept away, running the *Wasp* aboard on her starboard quarter at 3.40, the vessels fouling. The English crew, led by their commander, who fell dead in the attempt, made several determined attempts to board, but were each time repulsed with the utmost steadiness. At 3.44 Captain Blakely gave the order to board, when his men sprang into the rigging of the English brig with loud shouts, and within one minute after they reached her deck the British ensign was lowered, the action having lasted but nineteen minutes after the *Wasp* fired her first gun, or twenty-eight minutes from the time the English ship opened the engagement. The only unwounded officer left to surrender the vessel was a master's mate.

The prize proved to be H. B. M. brig sloop-of-war *Reindeer*, Captain William Manners, mounting eighteen 24-pound carronades and one bow gun, with a complement of 118 men. Her loss was 25 killed, including Captain Manners, and 42 wounded, among these the first lieutenant and master. The *Wasp* had 5 killed and 22 wounded, including two midshipmen, who subsequently died.

The *Reindeer* was literally cut to pieces in a line with her ports, her upper works, boats, and spare spars

being one entire wreck, and when the breeze sprang up the next day her foremast fell.

As the British ship was so seriously damaged Captain Blakely burned her, and after putting a portion of his wounded prisoners on board a neutral vessel proceeded to L'Orient with the *Wasp*, reaching that port on July 8th.

Captain Blakely remained in port refitting until the 27th of August, when he sailed for another cruise. Within two days he captured two prizes, and on September 1st cut out a vessel loaded with guns and military stores from a fleet of ten sail of merchantmen convoyed by the *Armada*, 74. In attempting to seize another he was chased away by the enemy.

That same evening, while running free, four sails were sighted, two on the larboard and two on the starboard bow. The *Wasp* was hauled up for the most weatherly of the four, and at 7 P.M. the chase began signalling with flags, lanterns, rockets, and guns. Blakely paid no attention to these, but kept his course, and by 9.20 he had the enemy on his lee bow within hail, and ordered her to heave to, which she declined to do. The *Wasp* then fired a gun at her. The shot was at once returned, when Blakely put his helm up and passed to leeward to prevent the enemy from escaping, both vessels hailing.

At 9.29 the *Wasp* ranged up alongside and opened the engagement with a broadside, and the firing was continued at close range with great severity, although the darkness was intense and a heavy swell was running. At ten the fire of the enemy had ceased, and Captain Blakely hailed to learn if she had surrendered. But as no reply was given and a few more guns were fired from the English ship, the *Wasp* poured in another

broadside and the enemy's mainmast went by the board.

At 10.12, as there was no response to his guns, Captain Blakely hailed again and asked if she had surrendered, and was answered in the affirmative. The *Wasp's* boat was lowered to take possession, but as she struck the water another vessel was seen coming up fast astern and the boat was at once rehoisted and the crew were sent back to their guns. At 10.36 two more sails were sighted astern and it became necessary to abandon the prize.

Captain Blakely ran his ship dead off before the wind in order to reeve new braces in place of those shot away, trusting to induce one of the strangers to follow where he could try conclusions with him apart from his consorts. But as the British vessel got within range of the *Wasp* she hauled her wind across the American's stern and fired a broadside, but as the *Wasp's* first antagonist was firing guns of distress she abandoned the chase and returned to her crippled friend.

It was afterward learned that the defeated vessel was H. B. M. brig *Avon*, 18, Captain the Hon. James Arbuthnot. The brig that followed the *Wasp* was the *Castilian*, 18, and one of the other vessels in sight was H. B. M. *Tartarus*, 20. The *Avon* was so much cut up that she sunk, her crew being saved by the *Castilian* with great difficulty. The *Avon's* loss was from 30 to 50. The *Wasp* had 2 killed and 1 wounded.

COMPARATIVE FORCE

	Tons	Guns	Metal	Men	Loss
Wasp....	509	22	327	160	3
Avon....	477	22	280	117	42

On September 12th, the *Wasp* took the brig *Three Brothers*, and, on the 14th, the brig *Bacchus*. Both

these vessels were scuttled, and on the 21st, in latitude 33° 12′ N., longitude 14° 56′ W., near the Azores, she took the brig *Atalanta*, 8.

As this was a valuable prize, Midshipman Geisinger was sent home in charge of her, and she arrived safely in Savannah, November 4th, bringing the last direct intelligence of the *Wasp*.

Some time afterward it was learned from the master of the Swedish brig *Adonis* that on October 9, 1814, he was chased by a ship and later boarded by a boat from the U. S. S. *Wasp* in latitude 18° 35′ N., longitude 30° 10′ W. The Swede had on board as passengers Acting-Lieutenant McKnight and Master's Mate Lyman, both of the *Essex*, who had been exchanged by Captain Hillyar. These gentlemen were transferred to the *Wasp* at their own request and the vessels parted. This was sixteen days after Mr. Geisinger left the *Wasp*, and is the last that was ever heard of the gallant little vessel.

During the forty days the saucy little *Wasp* was cruising in the English Channel, from June 2d to July 6th, and from August 30th to September 1st, she captured and destroyed one ship, one bark, one galliot, six brigs, and one schooner, beside burning and sinking two British man-of-war brigs; and from September 1st to the 21st she destroyed two brigs and sent one home as a prize. And this sharp work was done while the English Channel was patrolled by a British fleet numbering thirty-five ships of various sizes, mounting over one thousand guns.

Captain Johnston Blakely was born near the village of Seaford, County Down, Ireland, in October, 1781. He was brought to this country when two years old

CAPTAIN JOHNSTON BLAKELY, U.S.N.

From the painting by Gimbrede

and lived in Wilmington, N. C. After five years spent at school in New York, he was placed, in 1796, at the University of North Carolina with the intention of educating him for the bar, but the young man had a strong predilection for the sea, and through the offices of a friend he obtained a midshipman's warrant February, 5, 1800. Blakely served in the Mediterranean under Preble in the operations against the Barbary Powers, was made Lieutenant February 10, 1807, and in 1813 was given command of the *Enterprise*. On July 24, 1813, he was made Master Commandant and ordered to the *Wasp*.

Blakely was deeply chagrined when the *Enterprise*, with her usual luck, fell in with the *Boxer*, and captured her only two weeks after Burrows had relieved him in command of the former vessel. In a letter dated Newburyport, 28th January, 1814, he remarks:

> I shall ever view as one of the most unfortunate events of my life having quitted the *Enterprise* at the moment I did. Had I remained in her a fortnight longer, my name might have been classed with those who stand so high. I cannot but consider it a mortifying circumstance that I left her but a few days before she fell in with the only enemy on this station with which she could have creditably contended. I confess I felt heartily glad when I received my order to take command of the *Wasp*, conceiving that there was no hope of doing anything in the *Enterprise*. But when I heard of the contest of the latter ship and witnessed the great delay in the equipment of the former, I had no cause to congratulate myself. The *Peacock* has ere this spread her plumage to the winds, and the *Frolic* will soon take her revels on the ocean, but the *Wasp* will, I fear, remain for some time a dull, harmless drone in the waters of her own country.

How little the young officer could then foresee that the "dull, harmless drone" under his command was destined to class his name "among those that stand so high" in the naval annals of his country as a splendid seaman and a most gallant officer.

In recognition of his services, Captain Blakely's only child, a daughter, was educated by vote of the legislature at the expense of the State of North Carolina.

The fourth *Wasp* in the navy was the renamed English blockade-runner *Emma Henry*, captured with a cargo of six hundred bales of cotton near Beaufort, N. C., December 7, 1864, by the U. S. S. *Cherokee*, Acting Volunteer-Lieutenant William E. Dennison. The *Emma Henry* was condemned as a prize, sold, and purchased by the United States Government.

In May, 1865, the new *Wasp*, under command of Lieutenant-Commander W. A. Kirkland, was assigned to a special squadron fitted out for Rear-Admiral S. W. Godon, with which he sailed from Hampton Roads May 16, 1865, with the *Susquehanna*, *Monadnock*, *Canonicus*, *Chippewa*, and *Monticello*, with orders to intercept the Confederate ram *Stonewall*, and if she left the port of Havana, to destroy her.

As the *Stonewall* was delivered up to our government by the Spanish authorities in June, Admiral Godon and his squadron were sent to the coast of Brazil, where the *Wasp* remained until 1871, when she returned to Boston. After being repaired, the *Wasp* returned to the South American station in command of Commander A. T. Mahan, who was relieved in 1874 by Commander W. A. Kirkland. In 1876 the *Wasp* was surveyed, condemned, and sold at Montevideo.

The fifth *Wasp* in the service was Mr. J. H. Ladeu's fine steel steam yacht *Columbia*, purchased in April

1898, and renamed. She was 180 feet 8 inches long, 22 feet beam, and drew 15 feet of water; her tonnage was 380, and, like the *Hornet*, she was armed with 6- and 1-pounders and a Maxim automatic gun. The *Wasp* was ordered to the coast of Cuba, under command of Lieutenant A. Ward, to blockade duty between Havana and Bahia Honda. On May 13th, while coasting eastward from Bahia Honda, near Muriel, she fell in with the steamer *Gussie*, having on board a detachment of the First Regular Infantry, under Captain Joseph H. Dorst, of the Fourth Cavalry, and escorted by the revenue cutter *Manning*. Being informed that the troops intended to land, Lieutenant Ward deemed it his duty to accompany the expedition, and he proceeded ahead of the *Gussie* until she came to, at 2 P.M., off a point just west of the entrance to Cardenas Harbor, where, at 2.47 P.M., the first United States troops were landed on Cuban soil, and formed skirmish lines to the southward in a dense grove of underbrush. The two steamers were lying close inshore, during the disembarking of the troops, and at 3.15 the enemy opened fire upon the troops and upon the *Wasp*, to which she at once replied, moving slowly along broadside to the beach, and sweeping the entire length of the jungle with a rapid and deadly fire from her 6-pounders and the Maxim gun. The one hundred Americans, finding they were largely outnumbered and outflanked, decided to withdraw to the *Mangrove*, which they accomplished under cover of the *Wasp's* fire.

On June 14th the *Wasp*, in company with the *Detroit*, *Castine*, *Manning*, *Eagle*, *Wompatuck*, and *Osceola*, the whole under command of Captain Henry C. Taylor, in the *Indiana*, proceeded to the appointed rendezvous off Rebecca Shoal Light, to await the arrival of the trans-

ports from Tampa with General Shafter and his troops. During the next week the little *Wasp* was kept busily engaged in bringing up the straggling transports on their way to Daiquiri, a duty that required incessant vigilance in keeping the line in formation.

On July 21st the *Wasp* took part with the *Annapolis* and *Leyden* in the action at Nipe Bay. The *Wasp* led into the bay, where she was sent with the *Leyden* to reconnoitre the battery on Roma Point. Upon entering she found a Spanish cruiser, the *Jorge Juan*, at anchor about four miles from the signal station at the entrance. The *Wasp*, after signalling to the *Annapolis*, "the enemy is seen ahead," proceeded up the bay, and at 12.44 the Spanish cruiser opened fire upon her at 4500 yards' range. Returning the fire, the *Wasp* continued at a speed of eight knots up the bay, sustaining the enemy's fire unsupported for several minutes before the *Annapolis* came within range and opened upon the Spaniards. At 1.18 the *Jorge Juan* began to sink, her crew took to their boats, and twenty minutes later she went down in six and a half fathoms of water. The *Jorge Juan* was a wooden cruiser of 935 tons, with an armament of three Palliser guns, 6.3 M., two 3-inch Krupp guns, and two revolving guns, and a complement of 257 officers and men. The *Wasp* and *Leyden* were then sent up the bay to reconnoitre, and reported that there were no other vessels to be found. Nipe was subsequently held by our forces as a base of supplies.

The *Wasp* was kept in continuous and very active duty until the end of the war, doing excellent service, was subsequently loaned by the government to the State of Florida as a practice vessel for their naval militia, and is now (1902) the station ship at the naval station, Port Royal, S. C.

CHAPTER VI

THE "ENTERPRISE"

THE first vessel in the United States service bearing the name of *Enterprise* was a sloop, armed with twelve 4-pounder guns, and carrying fifty men. Commanded by Captain Dickenson, she was one of a fleet of seventeen small vessels built on Lake Champlain during the summer of 1776, under the direction of Brigadier-General Benedict Arnold, who was in command in the operations against Ticonderoga and Crown Point. They were officered and manned principally by soldiers and landsmen. This fleet fought a drawn battle with a British fleet of fifty vessels and one hundred guns off the island of Valcour, October 11, 1776, which lasted five hours, in which some of the American vessels were disabled and sunk. Two days later, in a running fight to the southward, one of the vessels was captured, after great loss. Soon after, the remainder of the American fleet was run on shore in a small creek, about ten miles from Crown Point, and destroyed by their own officers to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy, with the exception of the *Enterprise*, which, with the good fortune that seemed her birthright, escaped both capture and destruction. But the resistance of the Americans had been so stubborn that it discouraged the British commander, General Sir Guy Carleton, who

retired to Montreal for the winter. Arnold received great credit for his heroic conduct on Lake Champlain, in which he displayed the ability of a skilful naval commander; and the fight off Valcour, the first naval battle in the history of the United States, was aptly called "the naval Bunker Hill."

In the summer of the year 1789 the long-continued aggressions of French cruisers and privateers upon our mercantile marine had caused the somewhat tardy abrogation by Congress of all existing treaties with France, and American cruisers were ordered to capture any French vessels that might be found near the coast preying upon our commerce. The scope of this order was very shortly extended by authorizing the capture of such vessels wherever found, and letters of marque and reprisal were issued to private armed ships.

Early in 1799 our government built and equipped at Baltimore, Md., two schooners of about one hundred and sixty-five tons, the *Enterprise* and the *Experiment*. They each cost $16,240; their armament was twelve 6-pounders and their complement was about seventy men. These light, fast, handy little vessels, built on the fine modelled lines that had already made the Baltimore clippers famous for speed and seaworthiness, were especially intended to deal with the small fore-and-aft-rigged French privateers which fairly swarmed in the West Indies, readily avoiding capture by our heavy, square-rigged cruisers. The wisdom of this policy was speedily proved by the remarkable success of the new schooners against the enemy.

The *Enterprise*, Lieutenant-Commanding, John Shaw, got to sea on her first cruise in December, 1799, with a crew of seventy-six men, bound for the Windward Islands station. On February 3, 1800, on his return

from Curaçoa, while off the end of Porto Rico, Shaw fell in with the frigate *Constellation*, 38, Commodore Truxton, thirty-six hours after her warm engagement with the French frigate *La Vengeance*.

The Frenchman had struck to Commodore Truxton, but as the *Constellation* had lost her mainmast, the French frigate was enabled to escape in the darkness while the Americans were repairing damages. Comdore Truxton sent the *Enterprise* to Philadelphia with despatches, where she arrived fifteen days later, having experienced very heavy weather on the coast.

The *Enterprise* sailed again for the West Indies in March with despatches for Commodore Talbot, and, having delivered them, she proceeded to join Commodore Truxton at Jamaica. Off the eastern end of that island, however, Shaw fell in with an English sloop-of-war, and, learning that the Commodore had sailed for home, the *Enterprise* was at once hauled up for St. Kitts, the rendezvous of the Windward Squadron.

On April 1, 1800, the *Enterprise* had a smart brush with a brig showing Spanish colors, near the Mona Passage. The stranger had eighteen guns, of heavier calibre than the American, and the action lasted for twenty minutes, the brig continuing to fly the Spanish flag. At last both vessels withdrew, each convinced that a mistake in nationality had been made. Both vessels suffered materially in this combat, but it does not seem to have led to any diplomatic complications.

Lieutenant Shaw, finding it necessary after this contest to make some repairs, went in to St. Thomas. While there he was challenged to fight a French lugger of twelve guns outside the harbor, but, the Frenchman failing to keep the appointment, Shaw sailed for St. Kitts, capturing a small privateer on the way, and a

few days later he captured the letter-of-marque *La Seine*. This was quite a desperate fight, the Frenchman having twenty-four killed and wounded, while the *Enterprise* had several wounded but none killed. Two weeks later the *Enterprise* captured the 6-gun privateer *Citoyenne*, and sent her in to St. Kitts. The French loss in this engagement was fourteen killed and wounded, while the Americans had but eight wounded.

Returning to St. Kitts, the *Enterprise* refitted, and upon going to sea fell in with the same lugger that had challenged her a month before at St. Thomas, and actually captured her without firing a shot, very much to the surprise of Lieutenant Shaw, who had anticipated a severe fight. Shortly after this, while near Guadaloupe, the French privateer brig *L'Aigle* was encountered, and, after a brief contest, was carried by boarding, the French losing twelve killed and wounded, while the *Enterprise* had only three wounded.

On gaining the deck of their prize, the Americans found the French crew had deserted their guns and had run below decks. As the French commander had the reputation of being one of the most daring privateersmen in the West Indies, and as skilful as he was resolute, this cowardice excited some surprise. It was soon discovered, however, that the vessel was without officers. A round shot from the *Enterprise*, early in the action, struck the French captain on the upper part of his forehead, tearing away the scalp, and he lay for dead on the deck. He recovered his senses later and survived the injury. Another shot had passed directly through the breast of the first lieutenant, while the second lieutenant had fared little better than the captain, as a shot grazed his head, carrying away a

part of one ear and much of the scalp, leaving him also prone on the deck senseless. Being thus left without leaders, the crew deserted their quarters when the Americans boarded.

In July the *Enterprise*, then cruising to leeward of Dominico, fell in with the French privateer brig *Le Flambeau*, commanded by a brave and experienced seaman. There was little wind, and the American schooner could not close. Evidently thinking the American was a merchant vessel, the brig had her sweeps out, and was coming down on her expected prey. A breeze sprang up, however, and the *Enterprise*, getting the wind first, trimmed and made all sail, and started in chase of her adversary. The Frenchman, finding that he had caught a Tartar, attempted to make off before the wind under studdingsails. But the Yankee schooner had the heels of the privateer, and, keeping in her wake, and within musket-shot, Lieutenant Shaw made it very unpleasant for the Frenchman by a well-directed fire of small arms. At last the *Enterprise* drew abeam of the brig, and the two vessels then engaged at close quarters. During the fight the Frenchman's foretopmast was carried away, taking with the wreck several men who were aloft endeavoring to secure the spar, and although the brig made no effort to save her drowning men the *Enterprise* lowered a boat and picked them up. Then, running alongside the French vessel, and pouring in a rapid fire, Shaw soon forced her to surrender. The prize proved to be *Le Flambeau*, mounting fourteen 9-pounders, with a crew of one hundred and ten, while the *Enterprise* had only twelve 6-pounders and eighty-three men. The French loss was forty killed and wounded, while the Americans, with their usual good fortune, lost only ten men.

A week later the *Enterprise* chased for five hours, and finally captured, the French privateer *La Pauline*, of six guns and forty men, and during the month of December she took the letter-of-marque *Guadaloupenne*, of seven guns and forty-five men, and *L'Amour de la Patrie*, of six guns and seventy-two men. This made a grand total for six months for the *Enterprise* of seven privateers, with an aggregate of fifty-three guns and four hundred and fifty-six men captured, and four American merchantmen recaptured.

Returning to the United States, the brilliant services of Lieutenant Shaw were at once recognized by placing him in command of the captured French corvette *Le Berceau*, of twenty-six guns, while Lieutenant Charles Stewart was ordered to the command of the *Enterprise*.

By Act of Congress, March 3, 1801, the naval establishment was again reduced to a peace footing. Thirteen of the frigates, as named, were to be retained, and the President was empowered to sell all or any other of the vessels then in the service as, in his opinion, the good of the country might require. The only vessel the President signified his desire to retain, in addition to the thirteen specified in the act, was the *Enterprise*.

In May, 1801, the *Enterprise*, then commanded by Lieutenant Sterett, sailed for the Mediterranean in the American squadron under the command of Captain Richard Dale, who was ordered to make a demonstration in force against the Bashaw of Tripoli and the Bey of Tunis, in view of the probability of a declaration of war by Tripoli, which, as it proved, had actually at that time been made, although the news of it had not been received at Washington. The immediate cause of this war was the dissatisfaction of the Bashaw

of Tripoli and the Bey of Tunis with the amount of tribute they were receiving from the United States, which they considered insufficient as an immunity for refraining from the capture of American vessels.

In common with the principal European states, our young nation had long submitted to this incredible humiliation, and in January, 1798, we actually sent as a present to the Dey of Algiers the frigate *Crescent*, loaded with valuable gifts, including twenty-six barrels of dollars, "as a compensation for delay in not fulfilling our treaty stipulations in time." It is worthy of note that the captain and several of the officers and crew of the *Crescent* had at different times been prisoners at Algiers, while Richard O'Brien, who took passage in the frigate to become Consul-General to all the Barbary States, had been held as a prisoner at Algiers for ten years. The total value of the *Crescent*, with the gifts she carried, was estimated at $300,000, and this naturally excited the cupidity of the Bey of Tunis, who complained that he had received only $40,000 from the United States during the past year.

England, with her strong commercial instinct, then, as now, stood between the Turk and the civilized world as his quasi-protector, in the effort to secure for Great Britain the monopoly of the Mediterranean commerce, and Lord Sheffield did not hesitate to declare in Parliament: "That the Barbary States are advantageous to maritime powers (Great Britain) is certain. If they are suppressed, the little states of Italy would have much more of the carrying trade." These words, slightly paraphrased, might well have been used by Lord Salisbury in Parliament not many years ago.

In May, 1800, the United States frigate *George Washington*, Captain William Bainbridge, sailed from our

shores carrying the annual payment to the Dey of Algiers. That was the last tribute this nation was ever to pay to a foreign power, civilized or uncivilized, for soon after the stirring words rang out in the halls of Congress: "Millions for defence. Not one cent for tribute!"

Arriving at Algiers, Captain Bainbridge, very much against his will, was induced, at the solicitation of Consul-General O'Brien, to carry the Dey's personal present of money and slaves to the Sultan at Constantinople. The Dey did not hesitate to say, when Bainbridge at first declined this service, "Your nation pays me tribute, by which you become my slaves; I have therefore the right and power to order you as I may think proper." That Bainbridge was a gallant officer he conclusively proved in the coming years, but it is difficult in these days to comprehend how he could have brought himself to the point of complying with this arrogant demand. Within three years it was his fate to become a prisoner, and for nineteen months Bainbridge languished in the dungeons of the Bashaw of Tripoli. He could not well have fared worse had he defied the Dey of Algiers from the deck of his staunch frigate *George Washington*.

Upon the arrival of the American squadron at Gibraltar, the frigate *President* and the *Enterprise* were sent to Algiers, and subsequently the *Enterprise* was ordered to Malta. While cruising off that island on August 1, 1801, she fell in with the Tripolitan war polacre *Tripoli*, of fourteen guns and eighty-five men, and an action was at once begun which lasted three hours. During this desperate fight, the Tripolitan three times surrendered, but when the *Enterprise* sent a boat to take possession the enemy twice reopened fire and rehoisted

their colors. Exasperated by this treachery, Lieutenant Sterett determined to sink the polacre, and opened fire, but the Tripolitan commander at last threw his flag into the sea, begging for quarter. Lieutenant David Porter was again sent to secure the prize, which this time he accomplished. The Tripolitan loss was fifty killed and wounded, while, strange as it may seem, the Americans had no loss whatever. Sterett dismantled the polacre, leaving her with but one spar and sail, and, after throwing all her guns overboard, ordered her captain to make for the nearest port. For this gallant affair Lieutenant Sterett was promoted, and Congress voted him a sword, while each member of the crew received a month's extra pay.

The Tripolitan captain did not fare as well, for upon the arrival of the polacre at Tripoli the Bashaw ordered her wounded captain to be mounted on a jackass and paraded through the streets, and afterward to receive five hundred bastinadoes. So terrified were the Tripolitans at this event, that the sailors abandoned the cruisers fitting out, and only with the greatest difficulty could men be procured to navigate them.

Under orders from Washington, the *President* and the *Enterprise* returned to the United States in December, to avoid wintering in the Mediterranean. In February, 1802, the *Enterprise* again sailed for those waters, the first vessel of a squadron commanded by Commodore Victor L. Morris, which included the frigates *Chesapeake*, *Constellation*, and *New York*, and the corvettes *Adams* and *John Adams*. The frigates *Philadelphia* and *Essex* had remained on the station.

During this cruise the *Enterprise*, while commanded by the gallant Isaac Hull, then a lieutenant, actually cornered a Tripolitan 22-gun cruiser one night, driving

her to seek refuge in a narrow bay, and holding her there until daylight, when, the frigate *John Adams* coming down to the assistance of the plucky little schooner, the two American vessels stood inshore, opened fire, and soon afterward the cruiser blew up with all on board.

That summer, having a number of Tripolitan prisoners on board the flagship, the Commodore sent in the *Enterprise* with a flag of truce to arrange with the Bashaw for the exchange of the Tripolitan captives for an equal number of Americans held as prisoners in Tripoli. Our list of prisoners included one officer, twenty soldiers, eight merchants, and "some" women.

The Bashaw was at first disinclined to consider the proposition for an exchange, as he said he had no use for the prisoners we held, and the Americans were worth $500 a head to him. But he at last consented to give three Americans for the twenty-one soldiers, and he offered the same number of our people for the eight merchants, as they could be made to pay him a good ransom. As for the women, he advised the Commodore to keep them.

On December 23, 1803, the *Enterprise*, commanded by Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, captured a Tripolitan ketch, the *Mastico*, bound for Constantinople with female slaves for the Sultan's harem. Decatur had already proposed to Preble to run into the harbor of Tripoli at night with the *Enterprise* and destroy the *Philadelphia*, which had been taken possession of by the Tripolitans on November 1st, after she had grounded near the entrance to the port, but the Commodore would not sanction the plan. Preble decided, however, to send in the *Mastico* on this venture, and she was sent to Syracuse and fitted out for the expedition with great secrecy.

Decatur and his officers and crew, having captured the *Mastico*, claimed the right of taking her into the harbor on this perilous expedition. Every man and boy volunteered, but as the crews of the other ships also demanded recognition, six officers from the *Enterprise* and six from the *Constitution* were selected, with sixty-two men from the crews of the two vessels, and these, with a Maltese pilot, Salvatore Catalano, formed the crew of the *Mastico*.

On the night of February 9, 1804, Lieutenants Stephen Decatur and James Lawrence, Midshipmen Joseph Bainbridge, Jonathan Thorn, Thomas Macdonough, Ralph Izard, John Rowe, Charles Morris, Alexander Laws, John Davis, and Thomas O. Anderson, with the pilot, Catalano, and the crew, went on board the *Mastico* and, accompanied by the *Siren*, stretched across the Mediterranean, and as night closed in made for the harbor of Tripoli. As the weather was very unfavorable, with a heavy sea running, both vessels anchored about a mile to windward of the entrance.

A reconnaissance by boat satisfied Decatur that the attempt to enter would be attended with too great risk, so he decided to put to sea. This was done, and for seven days the eighty men crowded beneath the deck of this miserable little craft of forty tons suffered severely, being on short allowance of food and water and well-nigh devoured by vermin, with which the vessel swarmed.

On the sixteenth, the weather having moderated, the *Mastico* sailed in toward the port, and, about nine o'clock, gained the harbor by the eastern passage, in full sight of the city. Passing by the batteries at the entrance of the bay, the *Mastico* was steered directly for the *Philadelphia*, which could be readily distinguished by her size and her numerous well-lighted ports.

The strictest silence was observed on board the ketch, and her crew were kept below or hidden in dark corners, six or eight men dressed as Maltese sailors being all that were in sight. Just before ten o'clock, as the ketch came within hailing distance of the *Philadelphia*, Decatur ordered the quartermaster at the tiller to lay her across the frigate's bow, and as she sheered in toward the *Philadelphia's* fore-chains the Turkish sentry hailed. By Decatur's orders the pilot answered that the ketch was from Malta, that in the late gale she had lost her anchors and desired to make fast to the frigate's chain until an anchor could be obtained from shore.

The Turkish officer asked what brig that was in the offing, as the *Siren* had been seen. At Decatur's prompting Catalano replied that it was the *Transfer*, formerly a British man-of-war, which had been purchased at Malta for the Tripolitans and was anxiously expected by them. While this conversation was going on, the ketch was slowly drifting in toward the frigate, and the order to board was momentarily expected by the eager Americans, when a puff of wind struck the little vessel and she was brought broadside on to the frigate and exposed to her entire port broadside.

But Decatur retained his presence of mind, and in a very matter-of-fact way sent his boat to make a line fast to a ringbolt in the frigate's fore-chains, so they could haul the ketch ahead to the desired position for boarding. Meanwhile, and to still further complicate matters, the Tripolitans sent a boat with a hawser for the purpose of dropping the ketch astern of the frigate. The *Mastico's* boat took this hawser and carried it to their vessel, but at the same time the Americans began pulling steadily on the line fastened to the

fore-chains of the *Philadelphia*, thus sending the ketch ahead.

As they got her within ten yards of the frigate the Tripolitan officer discovered that the ketch had her anchor on her bow rail, and, loudly rebuking the pilot for his fasehood, he ordered his men to cut the rope the Americans were hauling on. As the ketch drew alongside, a Turk, leaning over the side, saw the Americans and gave the alarm, and the cry "Amerikano! Amerikano!" resounded through the ship.

Lieutenant Decatur, with two midshipmen, jumped into the *Philadelphia's* main-chains, but, his foot slipping, Midshipman Morris first gained the frigate's deck, where he was quickly joined by Decatur and Laws, while the whole body of Americans was now swarming over the bulwarks and through the ports. The surprised Turks offered but little resistance to this desperate assault, many of them jumping overboard in their fright. Clearing the quarter-deck of the enemy, the Americans formed in a compact body and drove all the Tripolitans on the spar-deck overboard and then ran below, where, after a brief struggle and without firing a shot, the ship was cleared of the enemy.

The combustibles were at once passed up from the ketch and the task of firing the ship was effected in a most thorough and systematic manner, and all this was the work of but twenty-five minutes since the first American had reached the *Philadelphia's* deck. As the *Mastico* shoved off, it was with difficulty they could escape from the flames that were bursting out of the *Philadelphia's* ports, and the glare of the fire rendered the ketch a fair mark for the guns of the enemy that had now opened upon them from all the batteries.

The shot flew thick about them, but by good fortune

they were not struck, and with sweeps heavily manned by eighty men the little vessel soon drew out of range. At the entrance to the harbor they were met by the *Siren's* boats, under Lieutenant James R. Caldwell, who had pulled inside to learn the fate of his countrymen, and to aid in their escape if possible.

Resting on their oars, the gallant crew of the *Mastico* with their comrades from the *Siren*, watched the superb spectacle as the *Philadelphia* burned until the fire reached her magazine, when, with a terrific explosion, the frigate was blown into fragments.

The *Siren* had run in and at first anchored about three miles from the rocks; but later, with the intention of covering the escape of the ketch if she should be pursued out of the harbor, Lieutenant-Commander Stewart got under way, and, the wind having failed, he swept the brig into eight fathoms of water, where he again anchored. All hands were eagerly watching for Decatur's signal of possession, and at last his rocket went up from the *Philadelphia*.

Stewart ran below to get another rocket for the answer, but when he returned to the deck the fire was seen shining through the frigate's ports, and in a few minutes more the flames were rushing up her rigging. Then the Tripolitan guns opened fire and Stewart's anxiety was almost overwhelming until the dashing of the ketch's sweeps were heard, and soon a boat came alongside and a man in a sailor's jacket sprang over the gangway of the brig. It was Decatur himself come to announce his victory!

In this most desperate adventure against overwhelming odds but one American was wounded. The loss of the Tripolitans has never been known, but many were killed in the struggle after boarding, a number were

drowned, and it is probable that others were blown up in the ship.

When the news of this exploit reached home, Decatur was promoted two grades—to captain, and received a sword from Congress, while all serving under him were suitably rewarded.

After his marked success in destroying the *Philadelphia*, Captain Preble vigorously continued his bombardment of the fortifications, and on August 3, 1804, sent in the six gunboats with the *Enterprise*, covered by the fire of the *Constitution*, to destroy the Bashaw's nineteen gunboats and galleys in the harbor.

The contempt of the Bashaw for "the Franks beyond the ocean," as they called the Americans, was shown at the time of this attack—a contempt, by the way, that was soon to be changed to a very wholesome feeling of respect. Standing upon the terrace of his palace, he watched the American gunboats coming in, and remarked to one of his officers, "They will soon mark their distance for tacking; they are a sort of Jews, who have no notion of fighting." The terrace was crowded with spectators to behold the chastisement the Bashaw's gunboats would give the Americans if they approached too near. But soon the shells from our flotilla began to fall in the town, and the inhabitants fled to the suburbs, while the Bashaw retreated to his bomb-proof room.

This proved to be one of the most stubborn fights of the war—a hand-to-hand combat that, in its various exhibitions of desperate personal courage, recalls the feats of the paladins of old.

Stephen Decatur, who led the second of the two divisions, with three gunboats, kept to windward and closed with one of the eastern division of nine Tripolitan

gunboats, boarding her with only fifteen men. The captain of this vessel, a large, powerful man, was singled out by Decatur, who charged him with a boarding-pike, but the Turk seized the weapon, wrested it from his assailant's hands, and turned the pike against its owner. Decatur drew his sword, parried the thrust, and made a blow at the pike with a view of cutting off its head, but the sword hit the iron and broke at the hilt, leaving Decatur helpless. As the Turk made another thrust with the pike, the gallant American partially averted it with his arm, but received the point in the flesh of one breast. Pushing the iron from the wound, Decatur sprang within the weapon and grappled his antagonist, the pike falling between them. The Turk's muscular strength, however, overcame the American and he fell across the gunwale of the boat. In this position Decatur managed to draw a small pistol from the pocket of his vest, reached the arm that was free around the body of the Turk, pointed the muzzle in, and fired. The ball passed entirely through the body of the Mussulman and lodged in Decatur's clothing. At the same instant he felt the grasp of his foe relax and he was liberated.

During this *melée* a sergeant of marines interposed between his commander and another Turk, who was about to cleave Lieutenant's Decatur skull, receiving the sabre stroke on his own arm, which was nearly severed by the blow.

By this time the other thirteen Americans had overcome the thirty-one Tripolitans, and hauled down the colors of the gunboat.

Decatur left her in charge of Lieutenant Macdonough and eight men, and laid another Tripolitan gunboat on board, carrying her, also, after a desperate

DECATUR'S STRUGGLE WITH THE ALGERINES

From a drawing by F. O. C. Darley

engagement of a few minutes. These two captured boats had thirty-three men killed, and twenty-seven were made prisoners, nineteen of them wounded.

Lieutenant Trippe had an equally exciting experience. He boarded a Tripolitan boat with only Midshipman Jonathan Henley and nine men, his own boat falling off before any more could join him. He was thus left to conquer thirty-six men with only eleven. For a time the victory seemed doubtful. Trippe received eleven sabre wounds, some of them dangerous. The blade of his sword bending, he, like Decatur, also closed with his antagonist, and both fell. In the struggle Trippe wrested the Turk's sword from him, and with it stabbed his antagonist to the heart.

After fourteen of the Tripolitans had been killed, the surviving twenty-two surrendered to the eleven Americans, and Trippe brought his captured gunboat off in triumph.

Lieutenant Somers, not able to fetch far enough to windward to co-operate with Decatur, fell upon the leeward division of the enemy, and with his single boat attacked five full-manned Tripolitan boats within pistol-shot. After a desperate fight he defeated and drove them, in a shattered condition and with the loss of many men, to seek refuge under the cover of the rocks.

Lieutenant James Decatur (brother to Stephen) engaged one of the larger Tripolitan gunboats. After losing a greater part of her men she surrendered, but as James Decatur stepped on board of his prize, the Turkish captain treacherously shot him through the head, and she escaped while the Americans were recovering the body of their unfortunate commander.

The result of this fight was the capture of three

gunboats and the destruction of three others. The Americans also brought off one hundred and three prisoners, beside leaving many killed and wounded, while our loss was only fourteen killed and wounded.

In this connection a story is told by a contemporaneous writer that may or may not be true. It is given here for what it is worth. He says when Decatur returned to the *Enterprise* from this expedition he at once took a boat and boarded the *Constitution* to report to Preble, without waiting to change his clothing, which was torn and begrimed with powder and blood.

The Commodore was on the quarter-deck awaiting Decatur, who, saluting, said: "Commodore, I have brought you out three gunboats!" At this Preble seized Decatur by the lapels of his coat, and, shaking him, responded: "Why did n't you bring them all out, sir!"

At this public indignity, Decatur, who had no sword, as it had been broken in his contest with the Turk, thrust his hand in his breast for a dagger he had carried through the day, but it also had been lost; and thus, says the chronicler, "a grave scandal was averted."

Preble went down to his cabin, where Decatur was speedily summoned. A long private conference ensued, and the incident was allowed to pass without further investigation.

It is certain that Preble was a man of violent temper, he was subject to outbreaks of anger well-nigh uncontrollable, and he was at the time under a very high state of nervous tension, as his plans for the entire destruction of the Tripolitan fleet had only partially succeeded.

The attacks upon the fortifications at Tripoli were

continued by Preble, but the resistance of the enemy was very stubborn, and as winter was coming on, the *Enterprise* and several of the smaller vessels of the fleet were sent to Syracuse. In the summer of 1805, the treaty of peace having been signed with the Deys of Algiers and Tripoli, the American fleet returned home, and the *Enterprise* was laid up in ordinary.

In 1809, the *Enterprise* was again sent out to the Mediterranean, under Lieutenant Trippe, returning in 1811.

In June, 1812, war having been declared with Great Britain, an effort was made to rehabilitate our navy, and the *Enterprise* was transformed from a schooner into a brig, armed with fourteen 18-pounder cannonades, and two long 9-pounders, with a crew of one hundred men. Master-Commandant Johnston Blakely, who had served as a midshipman in the *Enterprise* under Decatur, was put in command, with orders to look out for English privateers on the coast of Maine, as, twelve years before, the *Enterprise* had been sent to the West Indies after French freebooters.

With her usual good luck the little vessel was not long in finding a quarry, and in August, 1813, she captured the privateer *Fly*. Soon after, Lieutenant William Burrows, a very gallant young officer who had served with Preble in the *Constitution* during the Tripolitan war, was ordered to command the *Enterprise*, and on September 1st he sailed from Portsmouth, N. H., in quest of several privateers that had been reported in the vicinity of Monhegan, Maine.

On September 4, 1813, while near Pemequid Point, Maine, Burrows sighted a brig at anchor in a small inlet, which he recognized as a vessel of war. He at

once cleared ship for action, and hoisted the Stars and Stripes at the peak and at each masthead. The British brig leisurely got under way, fired several guns, and stood out seaward, with her colors also flying from each masthead.

While the two vessels were standing out, the *Enterprise* leading, Lieutenant Burrows directed that one of the long-nines should be brought aft and run out of a stern port in the poop cabin. As it was found that some of the fixtures interfered with getting a proper elevation on the gun, the Captain called the carpenter with his broadaxe to cut away the woodwork. This attracted the attention of the crew, many of whom had been in the *Enterprise* for some time, and they got the idea that Burrows was arranging to run from the Englishman and use the stern-chaser in defence. It was not until the first lieutenant relieved their minds on this point by the promise of a speedy fight with the enemy, that entire harmony was restored.

At 3 P.M. Burrows, having completed his preparations, shortened sail, tacked, and edged away toward the *Boxer*, the two vessels approaching on different tacks. At 3.20 they both kept away, and, as they ranged alongside, the *Enterprise* opened with her starboard, and the *Boxer* with her port guns. The *Enterprise* drew ahead, keeping up her fire, and as she passed the *Boxer's* bow the helm was put a-starboard, and she sheered across the Englishman's forefoot, delivering the fire of the long-nine, which had been run out of the cabin window, twice, at half-pistol-shot distance, with telling effect.

The *Boxer* then kept away and drew up on the quarter of the *Enterprise*, both vessels exchanging broadsides, but the American brig, keeping ahead of her

antagonist, again sheered across the *Boxer's* forefoot, and raked her with the long-nine. At this time the Englishman's maintopmast came down, bringing with it the topsail-yard, and the *Enterprise*, holding her position, continued the raking fire.

Very early in the action Lieutenant Burrows had been mortally wounded by a musket-ball, but the brave fellow had refused to be taken below, and throughout the action he was stretched on deck with a hammock beneath his head. As he fell he cried to his first lieutenant, "Never strike that flag!"

Lieutenant Edward McCall, who assumed command, had never before been in action, but he proved fully equal to the command, and fought and manœuvred the vessel with great skill. At 4 P.M. the fire of the enemy ceased, and a voice was heard hailing, "We have surrendered."

"Why don't you haul down your colors?" returned McCall through his trumpet.

"We can't, sir; they are nailed to the mast," was the reply.

A boat was lowered, and McCall, boarding the *Boxer*, found that her commander, Captain Samuel Blyth, had been killed at the first broadside from the *Enterprise*, and that, in all, the English had twenty-eight killed and fourteen wounded, while the *Enterprise* had but one killed and thirteen wounded, three of whom, however, died the next day.

Captain Blyth, who was a very gallant officer, equally noted for his gentleness and humanity, had been one of the pall-bearers a few weeks before in Halifax at the funeral of Captain Lawrence of the *Chesapeake*. Stimulated by the good fortune of Captain Broke of the *Shannon*, Blyth had sailed in the *Boxer* in search of

the *Enterprise*, expressing his determination to "lead another Yankee into Halifax Harbor."

When Lieutenant McCall returned to the *Enterprise*, he at once brought Blyth's sword to Burrows, who was still stretched out on the deck where he had fallen. As the young commander grasped the sword in both his hands and pressed it to his breast, he murmured, "I am satisfied." Soon after, his body was laid out in his own cabin, covered with the flag for which he had given up his life, "a smile on his lips," as one of his officers wrote to his wife.

An extract from a letter from Commodore Hull to Commodore Bainbridge, dated September 10, 1813, is of special interest as giving the testimony of an intelligent personal witness. Hull says:

> I yesterday visited the two brigs and was astonished to see the difference of injury received in the action. The *Enterprise* has but one eighteen-pound shot in her hull, one in her mainmast, and one in her foremast; her sails are much cut by grape shot, but no injury was done by them.
>
> The *Boxer* has eighteen or twenty eighteen-pound shot in her hull, most of them at the water's edge, several stands of grape shot in her side, and such a quantity of smaller grape that I did n't undertake to count them. Her masts, sails, and spars are literally cut to pieces; several of her guns are dismounted and unfit for service. To give an idea, I inform you that I counted in her mainmast alone three eighteen-pound shot holes.
>
> I find it impossible to get at the number killed, as no papers are found by which we can ascertain it. I, however, counted upwards of ninety hammocks that were in her nettings, besides several beds without hammocks. I have no doubt that she carried one hundred men on board.

The exact number on board the *Enterprise* was one hundred and two.

On September 7th, after the arrival of the *Enterprise* at Portland with her prize, the bodies of the two commanders were brought on shore in ten-oared barges, rowed at minute strokes by masters of ships, and accompanied by a procession of almost all the barges and boats in the harbor. Minute guns were fired from the vessels, the same military ceremony was performed over each body, and the procession moved through the streets, preceded by the selectmen and municipal officers, and guarded by the officers and crew of the *Enterprise* and *Boxer*. Burrows and Blyth were buried side by side in the old Eastern Cemetery at Portland, where their tombs may still be seen. Close by their side stands a stone tablet, erected by the young men of Portland, inscribed: "By the side of his gallant commander rests the body of Lieut. Kerwin Waters, a native of Georgetown, District of Columbia, who received a mortal wound Sept. 5, 1813, while a midshipman on board the U. S. brig *Enterprise*, in an action with His B. M. brig *Boxer*, which terminated in the capture of the latter."

Midshipman Kerwin Waters, a lad of but fifteen, was a young officer of much promise, and a great favorite with the men. When the crew got the impression that Captain Burrows was about to run from the *Boxer*, they asked Waters, who was the midshipman of the forecastle, to go aft and express to the captain their desire to engage the British ship and their entire confidence of success. Young Waters undertook the very delicate mission, and returned with an answer that entirely satisfied the crew.

In the fight that ensued Waters was so dangerously

wounded that it was not thought he would live to be landed, but he survived as a hopeless invalid for two years, although unable to be removed to his Southern home. The young people of Portland made him their special care, and he was watched with loving solicitude until his death. He was gazetted lieutenant on June 30, 1814, and received a silver medal from Congress for conspicuous gallantry.

The flag of the *Boxer*, which Captain Blyth so defiantly nailed to the mast, is still preserved among the trophies at the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

Longfellow alludes to this fight in his poem, "My Lost Youth." As the poet was born at Portland, February, 1807, he would have been six and a half years old at the time of the battle, and might very readily have remembered so important and interesting an event. He says:

> I remember the sea fight far away,
> How it thundered o'er the tide!
> And the dead captains as they lay
> In their graves o'erlooking the tranquil bay
> Where they in battle died.

This victory of the *Enterprise*, following so soon after the national humiliation that attended the capture of the ill-fated *Chesapeake* by the *Shannon*, caused great rejoicing in the North. One verse of an old sea-song in 1815 ran:

> The *Enterprise* of our Navy
> With a crew undaunted and brave,
> Fell in with the British brig *Boxer*
> And box'd her into the grave.

Another ditty followed the same line of thought:

ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE "ENTERPRISE" AND "BOXER"

From an original painting

Then next you sent your *Boxer*
  To box us all about,
But we had an *Enterprising* brig
  That beat your *Boxer* out.

She boxed her up to Portland,
  And moored her off the town,
To show the Sons of Liberty
  The *Boxer* of renown.

Lieutenant James Renshaw was ordered to command the *Enterprise*, and during the winter of 1813–14 she made an extended cruise to the southward in company with the *Rattlesnake*. While off the Florida coast, the *Enterprise* took three prizes, and on February 23, 1814, captured the privateer brig *Mars*, armed with fourteen long-nines and carrying seventy-five men. April 25th she was sighted by an English frigate that chased her for seventy hours, frequently getting within gunshot. On April 27th, it fell calm, whereupon Lieutenant Renshaw got out his boats and towed the schooner, until, a breeze springing up, he was enabled to escape from his pursuer. During this chase Lieutenant Renshaw threw overboard all but two of his guns, reserving those to repel possible boat attacks.

On returning to the United States at the end of this cruise the *Enterprise* was sent to Charleston, S. C., to act as a coast-guard vessel, in which service she was employed until the close of the war.

During the years 1816–19, the *Enterprise*, under command of Lieutenant Lawrence Kearney, was again attached to the Mediterranean squadron, and in 1821 she was sent to the West Indies to aid in breaking up the pirates who were infesting the Caribbean Sea.

Among these, Lafitte, who had distinguished himself at the battle of New Orleans and received a pardon in consideration of his gallant services against the British, had fitted out a large brigantine, the *Pride*, armed with sixteen guns and carrying 116 men, and returned to his old career in those waters.

Lieutenant Kearney with the *Enterprise* found Lafitte, and agreeably to the desire of our government, arranged with him to shift his cruising ground from the West Indies to the southern coast of the Gulf of Mexico, the idea seeming to be to relieve our commerce at the expense of our neighbors.

In October, 1821, the *Enterprise* encountered the noted pirate, Gibbs, with his fleet of piratical vessels while they were in the act of robbing the American ship *Lucies*, the brig *Aristides*, and the English brig *Larch*. Lieutenant Kearney burned two of the pirate vessels, drove Gibbs's schooner on shore, and finally burned her, and brought several of the pirate schooners to Charleston, S. C., where they were condemned.

In 1823, after her long and fortunate career, the *Enterprise* was wrecked on the Little Curaçoa, but all hands were saved.

To sum up the service of this little vessel, we find that the *Enterprise* took more French privateers in 1799–1800 than any vessel in the West Indies, while her action with the *Flambeau* was one of the warmest of the kind on record. In the Tripolitan war she captured the *Tripoli*, a cruiser of equal size, in a very desperate engagement. She captured the *Mastico*, and with that vessel the commander of the *Enterprise*, with several of his officers and men, aided by a detail from the *Constitution*, destroyed the *Philadelphia*.

In the War of 1812, she took the English brig *Boxer*

after a sharp engagement. She escaped from several English frigates by her superior speed; and of the five small vessels in the Mediterranean squadron, the *Enterprise*, *Vixen*, *Siren*, *Nautilus*, and *Argus*, the *Enterprise* alone escaped capture by the enemy. Finally she rounded out her career by honorable and successful work against the pirates in the West Indies.

After such an adventurous and singularly fortunate career, it is not strange that she earned the name in the navy of the "lucky little *Enterprise*."

The third *Enterprise* in our naval service was a schooner of 194 tons, mounting ten guns. She was purchased in New York, in 1831, for $27,935, and was sold in Boston in 1845. During her career she cruised on the Brazil station, under command of Lieutenant S. W. Downing, 1832–33. She was in the East Indies, 1834–37, under Lieutenants A. S. Campbell and George Hollins. Cruised in the Pacific, 1838–39, under Lieutenants William M. Glendy and H. Ingersoll; on the Brazil station, 1839–42, under Lieutenants F. Ellery and Percival Drayton, and Commander Louis Goldsborough; and, in 1843–44, she was commanded by Lieutenants J. P. Wilson and J. M. Watson.

These were the piping times of peace, and the third *Enterprise* had no opportunity of making a war record. But it will be noted by the names recorded above that, like her immediate predecessor, this little vessel had also among her various commanders some officers who were later highly distinguished in our naval annals.

The present steam sloop-of-war *Enterprise*, the fourth of her name in our service, was built, 1873–76, at Kittery, Me., by John W. Griffith and the United States Government. She is bark-rigged; length, 185 feet; beam, 35 feet; mean draught, 14 feet 3 inches;

displacement, 1375 tons. Her armament when she was first commissioned was: one 150-pounder rifle pivot, one 60-pounder rifle on top-gallant forecastle, four 9-inch Dahlgren smooth-bore guns, one 3-inch B. L. rifle, one Gatling gun, and two howitzers for boats and saluting purposes.

She carried 195 officers, seamen, and marines, and proved herself one of the fastest and most efficient vessels on the North Atlantic station, having a speed under steam of about twelve knots an hour.

In 1878, the *Enterprise*, Commander Thomas O. Selfridge, U. S. N., surveyed the Amazon and Madeiar rivers a distance of thirteen hundred miles from their mouth. Upon the completion of this work the ship was sent across the Atlantic in 1879 to reinforce the European squadron. From 1880–82, under the command of Commander Edwin M. Shepard, the *Enterprise* was in the North Atlantic squadron.

On January 2, 1883, the *Enterprise* sailed from Norfolk, Va., under command of Commander A. S. Barker, U. S. N., to join the Asiatic squadron. The route selected by the Navy Department for the ship was *via* the Cape de Verde Islands and Cape of Good Hope. From the Cape, Commander Barker was instructed to cruise along the coast of South Africa, thence to Madagascar, the Comoro Islands, and Zanzibar. From Zanzibar the *Enterprise* was directed to cross the Indian Ocean by the way of the straits of Sunda and proceed to China, touching, *en route*, at Borneo.

The Navy Department directed, for the purpose of adding to the existing knowledge of the ocean's bed, that deep-sea soundings should be taken on this coast at intervals of one hundred miles. For that purpose the Sigsbee Improved and Sir William Thompson's

deep-sea sounding apparatus were put on board, provided with Belknap's specimen cups, and other modern apparatus.

During this cruise around the world, the *Enterprise* made several important discoveries and added materially to our previous hydrographic knowledge of the contour of the bottoms of the North and South Atlantic Oceans. Among these discoveries were two submarine peaks in the South Atlantic Ocean, and an extensive sand-bank several hundred miles from the coast of South America. Commander Barker also found the deepest depression, but one, that had been discovered up to that time in the North Atlantic, when, in sounding to the northward of the Virgin Islands and Porto Rico, a specimen was brought up from the bottom from a depth of 4529 fathoms, or five and one eighth miles. The *Blake*, under Commander Brownson, had previously obtained 4561 fathoms within forty miles of this spot.

During this cruise of thirty-eight months the *Enterprise* also visited all the Chinese treaty-ports, and was present at the bombardment by the French of Foochoo arsenal, Pagoda Anchorage, witnessing the destruction of the Chinese fleet and the passing of the forts in the Min River by the French squadron under Vice-Admiral Courbet. This engagement was exceedingly dramatic in its incidents, it being the first time that the modern quick-firing guns had been used in battle. The effect of these guns when fired from the tops of the French fleet was terrific, making perfect charnel-houses of the unprotected decks of the Chinese ships.

Upon her return from that cruise, in 1886, she was refitted and sent out to the European squadron,

1887–90, under the command of Commander Bowman H. McCalla, U. S. N.

In 1891, the *Enterprise* was sent to the Naval Academy, Annapolis, for the use of that institution; and, in 1892, she was assigned by the United States Government to the use of the Massachusetts Nautical Training School, where she is now used as a school-ship for the purpose of instructing about one hundred young men (residents of that Commonwealth) in the theory and practice of seamanship and in steam and electrical engineering. The Navy Department detail for the ship three naval officers, who are also instructors in the school.

CHAPTER VII

"OLD IRONSIDES"

THE first provision for the establishment of a navy, under the present Constitution of the United States, is found in the Act of 27th March, 1794, enacted with a view to prevent and punish the depredations of the Algerine corsairs on our commerce. This act authorized the purchasing or building of four ships of 44 guns and two of 36 guns each.

This was the outcome of the audacity displayed by the Algerines who, during the previous year had sent out eight corsairs that had captured eleven American ships and enslaved 106 American seamen. Captain Richard O'Brien, one of the captives, who was afterward Consul-General to all the Barbary States, writing from Algiers, in December, 1793, declared that unless we sent a fleet of swift sailing vessels to sea to protect our commerce the corsairs of Algiers and Tunis would soon appear upon our coast.

Washington referred this matter to Henry Knox of Massachusetts, Secretary of War, and he, after consulting with various shipbuilders and merchants, accepted the plans of Mr. Joshua Humphreys of Philadelphia, who prepared the models for six ships which, when built, were unquestionably the finest ships of

their class afloat. The 44-gun frigates were the *Constitution*, *President*, *United States*, and *Chesapeake*, and the two of 36 guns were the *Constellation* and the *Congress*. The battery of the *Chesapeake* was afterward changed to 36 guns, so that there were three of each class built.

Mr. Humphreys gave much thought to the plans for these ships, and in his designs departed widely from the existing principles of European navies, where ships were distinguished arbitrarily by their rates. By his advice the scantlings of the new frigates were made equal to those of the 74's, while their armament consisted of long 24-pounders on the gun-deck, instead of the lighter 12- or 18-pounders that frigates had heretofore mounted.

In one of his letters Mr. Humphreys says:

> It was determined of importance to this country to take the lead in a class of ships not in use in Europe, which would be the only means of making our little navy of any importance. It would oblige other powers to follow us intact, instead of our following them; considering at the same time [he very shrewdly adds], it was not impossible we should be brought into a war with some of the European nations; and if we should be so engaged, and had ships of equal size with theirs, for want of experience and discipline, which cannot immediately be expected, in an engagement we should not have an equal chance, and probably lose our ships. Ships of the present construction have everything in their favor: their great length gives them the advantage of sailing, which is an object of the first magnitude. They are superior to any European frigate, and if others should be in company, our frigates can always lead ahead and never be obliged to go into action, but on their own terms, except in a calm; in blowing weather our ships are capable of engaging to advantage double-deck ships.

The wisdom of Mr. Humphreys's ideas, which prevailed with Washington and General Knox, was conclusively proved within the next few years, after the conflicts between the American and British frigates. At first the English newspapers spoke derisively of our "fir-built frigates manned by a handful of dastards and outlaws," while the British naval officers criticised their "clumsiness" and declared the ships were too heavy for rapid manœuvring, while their batteries were too heavy for effective use.

As a matter of fact, after losing a few frigates in single combat with our new ships, the British government proceeded to cut down or razee several of their 74's, with the intention of overmatching our frigates with two-deck ships of their own rating. And later, profiting by our example, they built a large class of frigates equal to our 44-gun ships.

Under the complicated system then prevailing, the material for the hulls and equipment of the new ships was purchased by the Treasury Department, while the naval agents, who received two and one half per cent. on approved bills, contracted for the labor and bought the less important materials. The captains ordered to command the ships superintended their construction and fitting out, while the naval constructor was solely responsible for the workmen, for the material used, and for the construction of the ships after the plans prepared by Mr. Humphreys.

Colonel George Claghorn was appointed naval constructor for the *Constitution*, with Mr. Hartly as his assistant. General Henry was the naval agent, who made all payments, and Captain Samuel Nicholson was ordered to command the new ship, acting as inspector during her construction. Edmund Hartt's shipyard,

near the present Constitution wharf in Boston, was selected as the place of building; her keel was laid there, and after two unsuccessful attempts she was finally launched on October 21, 1797, "before a numerous and brilliant collection of citizens," as one of the newspapers announced. The frigate was of 1576 tons, and cost $299,336. But although the *Constitution* was afloat, the act making an appropriation to complete the six frigates and fit them for sea did not pass until March 27, 1798.

By a provision of the law of 1794, under which the six 44- and 38-gun frigates had been laid down, all work upon them was suspended by the treaty of peace with Algiers, ratified in November, 1795. A new act, however, was passed early in 1796, which directed the completion and equipment of two of the 44's and one of the 38's, and under this act the *Constitution*, *United States*, and *Constellation* were completed and equipped, but work on the other three ships was stopped and the perishable portion of their materials was ordered to be sold.

In his speech to Congress, December 7, 1796, President Washington, in directing the attention of Congress to the needed protection of our commerce by an increase of our naval force, said:

> The naval power, next to the militia, is the natural defence of the United States. The experience of the last war would be sufficient to show that a moderate naval force, such as would be easily within the present abilities of the Union, would have been sufficient to have baffled many formidable transportations of troops from one state to another, which were then practiced. Our sea coasts, from their great extent, are more easily annoyed and more easily defended by a naval force than any other. With all

the materials, our country abounds in skill, our naval architects and navigators are equal to any; and commanders and seamen will not be wanting.

By official documents published at that time it appeared that the peace obtained from the Dey of Algiers in November, 1795, cost the United States Government nearly one million dollars, a sum which would have provided five or six stout frigates.

From 1775 to 1789 the navy had been controlled in turn by a "Marine Committee" of Congress, 1775; a "Board of Admiralty," 1779; a "Secretary of Marine," 1781; an "Agent of Marine," 1781, and August 7, 1789, by Act of Congress, the control of the navy passed to the Secretary of War, where it remained until April 30, 1798, when an Act of Congress was passed authorizing the establishment of the Navy Department, the chief officer of which was to be styled Secretary of the Navy. He was to execute all orders that he might receive from the President of the United States relative to the construction, armament, equipment, and employment of vessels of war, and other matters connected therewith, and was to have a competent number of clerks to assist him in performing the duties of his office. Under this act, George Cabot of Massachusetts, the great-grandfather of the present junior Senator from that State, was appointed as the first Secretary of the Navy, by President Adams and the appointment was confirmed by the Senate. Mr. Cabot served from May 3d to May 21st, 1798, when his successor, Benjamin Stoddart of Georgetown, D. C., was appointed and entered upon the duties of the office in June, 1798.

It was July 22, 1798, before the *Constitution* sailed on her first cruise. Her officers were: Captain, Samuel

Nicholson; First Lieutenant, Charles Russell; Lieutenants, Benjamin Lee, Richard C. Beale, Isaac Hull; Lieutenant of Marines, Lemuel Clark; Sergeant, William Reed. Her complement was four hundred men.

After a month at sea, to give the crew practice at the guns and under sail, the *Constitution* put in to Newport for orders on August 21st, and sailed two days later, in company with four revenue cutters, in search of French armed ships. This cruise was uneventful, and in December the ship was transferred to Commodore John Barry's squadron to cruise among the Windward Islands. In 1799, Captain Nicholson returned to Boston and was relieved by Commodore Silas Talbot, who took the *Constitution* as his flagship, with Isaac Hull as first lieutenant.

Captain Talbot had been a sailor in his youth, but at the outbreak of the Revolution he entered the army and was rapidly promoted, until, in 1799, he had attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel. He subsequently retired and served one term in Congress. In 1794, when the President selected six captains for the navy, the name of Silas Talbot was third on the list. Joshua Barney was fourth, but that gallant officer declined his appointment, "not being willing," as he wrote, "to be junior to 'Lieut.-Colonel Talbot.'"

The *Constitution* sailed from Boston in August, 1799, for service in the French West Indies. This cruise, which lasted twelve months, was marked by but two events of any importance: one of these was a friendly trial of speed with an English frigate commanded by an acquaintance of Commodore Talbot. The English captain declared he could beat the *Constitution* with his ship on the wind, and, as he was lately from the

island of Madeira, he wagered a cask of wine against its equivalent in money upon the result.

The English ship went into port, and after her bottom was cleaned, came out, and the two ships stood off-shore, keeping together at night. At dawn, at the firing of a gun, each ship began working to windward on short tacks. Isaac Hull, as first lieutenant, handled the *Constitution*, and his skilful seamanship was amply rewarded when, at the sunset gun, which marked the end of the contest, the Englishman was hull down to leeward. The *Constitution* then squared away and ran down to her competitor, joining her after dark. The English captain good-humoredly acknowledged his defeat and sent a boat with the cask of Madeira.

In the other exploit Hull was also the leading figure. It was ascertained that a valuable French letter of marque was lying in Port au Platte, a small harbor on the Spanish side of the island of St. Domingo, and as she was a dangerous ship on account of her sailing qualities, Commodore Talbot determined to attempt cutting her out. This vessel had formerly been the British packet *Sandwich*, and she only waited to complete a cargo of coffee to make a run for France. The legality of the enterprise was more than questionable, but the French picaroons received so much favor in the Spanish colonies that the Americans were less scrupulous than they might otherwise have been.

As soon as it was determined to make the effort, Lieutenant Hull went in on the night of May 10, 1800, with one of the frigate's cutters and reconnoitred. Commodore Talbot was compelled to defer the expedition for want of a proper craft to avoid causing suspicion, when fortunately one was found by accident.

An American sloop called the *Sally* had been employed on the coast of the island, under circumstances that rendered her liable to detention, and she was brought out of one of the small French ports by a boat of the frigate. This sloop had recently left Port au Platte with an intention of soon returning there, and she at once afforded all the facilities that could be desired.

Commodore Talbot accordingly threw a party of seamen and marines into the *Sally*, and, giving the command to Lieutenant Hull, that officer was directed to proceed on the duty without further delay. The sloop was manned at sea, to avoid detection, and she sailed at an hour that would enable her to reach Port au Platte about noon of the succeeding day. In the course of the night, while running down for her port, under easy sail, a shot suddenly flew over the *Sally*, and soon after an English frigate ranged up alongside. Lieutenant Hull hove to, and when the boarding lieutenant reached the sloop's deck, he found so large a party of men and officers in naval uniforms that he was both startled and surprised. He was told the object of the expedition, however, and frankly expressed his disappointment, as his own ship was only waiting to let the *Sandwich* complete her cargo in order to cut her out.

The *Sally's* movements were so well timed that she arrived off the harbor's mouth at the proper hour, and the *Sandwich* was found lying with her broadside bearing on the approach, and a battery at no great distance to protect her. As soon as near enough to be seen, Hull sent most of his crew below, and, getting an anchor ready over the stern to bring the sloop up with, he stood directly for the enemy's bows. So admirably was everything arranged that no suspicion was ex-

cited until the *Sally* ran the *Sandwich* aboard, when the *Constitution's* crew boarded her and carried the sloop without the loss of a man. At the same time, Captain Carmick landed with his marines, entered the battery, and spiked the guns.

Notwithstanding a great commotion on shore, the Americans now went to work to secure their prize. The *Sandwich* was found stripped to a girtline, with everything below. Before sunset, however, she had royal yards across, her guns scaled, her new crew quartered, and soon after the prize weighed, beat out of the harbor, and joined the frigate.

No enterprise of the sort was ever executed with greater steadiness or discipline. Lieutenant Hull gained great credit by the completeness with which he fulfilled his orders, and it was not possible for an officer to have been better sustained; the absence of loss usual in cases of surprise in which the assailed have the means of resistance, being one of the strongest proofs not only of gallantry and spirit, but of the coolness of the assailants.

In the end, however, this capture, which was clearly illegal, cost the *Constitution* dear. Not only was the *Sandwich* afterward given up, but all the prize money of the cruise went to pay damages.

The *Constitution* returned to Boston in August, 1800, and after refitting sailed for the West Indies in November, remaining on that station until the treaty with France was ratified in March, 1801, when she returned to Boston, where she was dismantled at the Charlestown Navy Yard. The *Constitution* remained there until August, 1803, when she was put in commission under command of Captain Edward Preble and sailed for the Mediterranean, August 14th, carrying out as

passengers Colonel Tobias Lear, Consul-General of the United States to the Barbary States, with his wife.

On the passage out, when near the entrance to the Straits of Gibraltar, the *Constitution* found herself one dark evening, with a very light breeze, near a ship-of-war. Preble ordered his crew silently to quarters and then hailed, "What ship is that?" To which the reply was the same question. Preble answered, "The United States ship *Constitution;* what ship is that?" The stranger replied by repeating the question again. Preble now took the trumpet and hailed, saying: "I shall now hail you for the last time. If a proper answer is not returned I will fire a shot into you." The answer came sharp and quick, "If you fire a shot, I will return a broadside!" Preble then hailed, "What ship is that?" And the reply came, "This is His Britannic Majesty's ship *Donegal*, eighty-four guns, Sir Richard Strahan, an English Commodore. Send your boat on board." Preble sprang on the hammock nettings and returned answer, "This is the United States ship *Constitution*, forty-four guns, Edward Preble, an American Commodore, who will be damned before he sends his boat on board any vessel!" Then turning to the crew, he said, "Blow your matches, boys."

A boat soon arrived with a lieutenant from the frigate *Maidstone* with an apology for the seeming rudeness. They had been taken by surprise, not seeing the *Constitution* until she had hailed, and had then kept up the parley until they could go to quarters, having no idea that the vessel was an American ship-of-war.

The *Constitution* arrived at Gibraltar, September 12, 1803, in twenty-nine days from Boston, and Commodore Preble there relieved Commodore Morris in command of the squadron. When the remainder of the

ships came out, Preble had under his orders: the *Constitution*, 44, flagship; *Philadelphia*, 44; brigs *Argus*, 16, and *Siren*, 16; and schooners *Vixen*, 14, *Nautilus*, 12, and *Enterprise*, 12. The commanding officers of this little fleet were Edward Preble, William Bainbridge, Isaac Hull, Charles Stewart, John Smith, Richard Somers, and Stephen Decatur. Five of these young commanders—for all of them but Preble were below the age of thirty—in the record of their glorious achievements have contributed brilliant pages to our American naval history.

After his arrival, Preble found that on August 26th Captain Bainbridge of the *Philadelphia* had captured a Moorish cruiser,—the *Meshoba*, of twenty-two guns,—having in company the American brig *Celia* of Boston, which had been taken by the Moor as a prize. The Moorish captain had a commission signed by the Governor of Tangier.

Captain Preble took prompt measures in this case, and with the *Constitution*, 44, *New York*, 36, *John Adams*, 28, and *Nautilus*, 12, entered the port of Tangier on September 17, 1803, and demanded an immediate audience with the Emperor of Morocco. The *Constitution* displayed a white flag in token of amity, but the crew were at quarters. The Emperor was reported to be absent, but Preble was informed he would return on October 5th.

Taking a short run to sea, the *Constitution* returned on the sixth, and Preble anchored his fleet within one and a half miles of the batteries, the ships all at quarters and the guns cleared for action. The Emperor, with five thousand troops, came down in great state to the beach opposite the squadron, where he was saluted with twenty-two guns, and the ships were dressed with colors.

The salutes were returned and the Emperor sent off to the ships a present of bullocks, sheep, and fowls as a token of his good will. On the eleventh, Preble landed, and at an audience terms of peace were drawn up, the action of the Governor of Tangier was disclaimed, and he was removed from office. It was further arranged that all American vessels captured should be returned, while a letter of friendship and peace was forwarded to the President signed by the Emperor, and it was agreed that no more tribute should be paid by America. Preble, for his part, released the *Meshoba* and his Moorish prisoners.

On October 20, 1803, Preble declared Tripoli in a state of blockade, and on November 13th he sailed with the *Nautilus* and *Argus* to land Colonel Lear at Algiers; and, on the twenty-fourth, he learned from a British merchant vessel of the loss of the *Philadelphia* on October 31st at Tripoli.

Bainbridge had sent off the *Vixen* in search of a Tripolitan cruiser, and while alone on the blockade he chased a xebec inshore, and, in hauling off, the *Philadelphia* unfortunately ran on a shelving rock that was unknown to the Americans. Everything was done to get the ship off by running the guns aft, throwing anchors overboard, pumping out the fresh water, and cutting away the foremast, but all efforts were useless, and meanwhile nine Tripolitan gunboats appeared and, taking position astern of the frigate, where the *Philadelphia's* guns could not be brought to bear, they opened fire upon her.

As a successful defence was impossible under these conditions, Bainbridge flooded the magazines, scuttled the ship, and surrendered to save the lives of his crew. A few days afterward, in a northwest gale, the

Edward Preble.

COMMODORE EDWARD PREBLE, U.S.N.

From the painting in Faneuil Hall, Boston

ship was floated and carried into the harbor by the Tripolitans.

The loss of this fine ship, which in number of guns represented fully one third of his force, was a very severe embarrassment to Preble; and to a certain extent his subsequent operations were hampered by the fact that over three hundred American officers and seamen were held in captivity by the Dey of Tripoli.

On March 27th, Preble came to Tripoli with the *Constitution* from Syracuse and sent in a flag of truce to effect an exchange of prisoners, but the Dey would not consent. Failing in this the Commodore sailed for Naples and succeeded in arranging with the King for a loan of six gunboats of twenty-five tons burthen, and two mortar-boats, and after making necessary preparations he sailed for Tripoli on July 14th, arriving off that city, with the gunboats in tow, on the twenty-fourth of the month.

The defences Preble was now about to attack were of a very formidable character. The city of Tripoli was walled and the shore batteries mounted 119 guns, many of heavy calibre. In the harbor were moored nineteen gunboats, two large galleys, two schooners, and a brig, all well armed, while the shore forces numbered fully twenty-five thousand men.

To oppose this, Preble had, in all, one frigate, three brigs, three schooners, six gunboats, each carrying one long 24-pounder, and two mortar-boats, each mounting one 13-inch brass mortar, with a crew of forty men. The American fleet had, in all, 1060 men. But, nothing deterred by the great odds against him, Preble began on July 25th a series of persistent attacks upon the Tripolitans, which lasted until September 4th. Nearly every day, when the weather permitted, the ships went

in, but on several occasions, when anchored in preparation to attack the batteries, they were driven to sea by northeast gales, which usually lasted for several days.

On the afternoon of August 4th, the fleet stood in, with the wind from the eastward, until the ships were in point-blank range of the batteries. Then, covered by a heavy fire from the *Constitution* and the mortar-boats, the six gunboats, led by Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, advanced to attack the Tripolitan gunboats, as related in the previous chapter. The result of this expedition was the destruction of three of the enemy's gunboats and the capture of three others that were brought off to the fleet. During this action the *Constitution* fired 262 shot into the town, the Americans receiving in turn very little damage from the Tripolitan fire.

On August 7th, another attack was made upon the town by the gunboats, the *Constitution* not participating, as the wind and current were both unfavorable for a ship of her size. In this action one of our gunboats lately captured from the Tripolitans was blown up by a hot shot from the batteries penetrating her magazine. Lieutenant Caldwell, Midshipman Dorsey, and eight seamen were killed; the others escaped uninjured.

That night the *John Adams*, Captain Chauncey, joined the fleet with the news that additional ships were coming out to join the squadron, under command of Commodore Samuel Barron, who was to relieve Commodore Preble.

On August 10th, the Dey indicated, through the French consul, a disposition to treat, and a flag of truce was sent in, but the terms he proposed were a ransom of $500 for each American captive, which was not acceptable to Preble, who, instead, offered a gross sum of $100,000, which the Dey declined to accept.

On the twenty-fourth a night attack was made, lasting four hours, with little perceptible result, and, on the night of the twenty-eighth, Preble took the *Constitution* in within one and a half miles northeast of the entrance, the small vessels going yet closer in, and opened a severe fire, which was kept up until daylight. Preble then ran in until the *Constitution* was within musket-shot of the Crown and Mole batteries, when he brought to and fired upwards of three hundred round shot, besides grape and canister, into the town, the Bashaw's castle, and the batteries. For a time this tremendous fire silenced the castle and two of the batteries, and, after keeping the cannonading up for three quarters of an hour, he hauled off. Preble reports that "a large Tunisian galliot was sunk in the mole, and a Spanish Seignor received considerable damage. The Tripoline galleys and gunboats lost many men and were much cut." Although the *Constitution* was considerably injured in her rigging in this action at close quarters, and some grape-shot were found sticking in her hull, not a man was hurt on board the ship. On September 3d, the *Constitution*, with the bomb vessels, again attacked the town and batteries, disabling several Tripolitan gunboats, and throwing a number of shell into the town before the increasing wind forced them offshore.

For some time Preble had contemplated sending a fire-ship into the harbor to destroy the enemy's shipping, and to that end the *Intrepid*, that had been so successfully used the previous year by Decatur in the destruction of the *Philadelphia*, was selected. Master-Commandant Richard Somers, of the *Nautilus*, volunteered for command of this perilous enterprise, and Midshipmen Henry Wadsworth (an uncle of the poet

Longfellow) and Joseph Israel, with ten men, all volunteers, made up her crew. One hundred barrels of powder were placed below her deck, upon which were piled one hundred and fifty fixed shells, while a fuse, calculated to burn fifteen minutes, led aft to a box filled with combustibles.

At eight o'clock on September 4th, the *Intrepid*, with two boats towing astern for the escape of her crew, was accompanied in as far as the rocks off the western entrance by the *Argus*, *Vixen*, and *Nautilus*. After leaving her consorts, close watch was kept upon the ketch by the crews of these vessels, and the last seen of her she was standing into the harbor about a musket-shot from the mole. Then the darkness shut her in, but soon after the batteries began firing in all directions. This was shortly followed by a vivid flash and a tremendous explosion, which was heard and felt by the ships outside. For an instant the mast and sail of the ketch, outlined in fire, were lifted into the air, and then all was darkness!

In the most painful state of anxiety the Americans waited all night for the return of the boats of the *Intrepid*, but they did not appear, and the cause of the explosion has never been explained, although there were various theories. Preble believed the ketch had been unexpectedly boarded by one of the Tripolitan gunboats and that Somers had put a match to the magazine, preferring death to capture. This is confirmed by a story told General Eaton the following winter by an Arnaut Turk who had been in the Tripolitan service, and who said the *Intrepid* had been boarded by two row galleys.

This disastrous affair was virtually the end of the war, for the season was now too far advanced for fur-

ther operations, and on the 6th of September Preble sent the gunboats and mortars back to Syracuse in tow of the *Enterpise* and *Nautilus*, and on the tenth Commodore Barron arrived off Tripoli with the frigates *President* and *Constellation* and took command of the squadron. Four days later, the *Congress* having arrived, Preble proceeded to Malta in the *Constitution*, whence he returned home in the *John Adams*.

Decatur, who had received his commission as captain, now took command of the *Constitution*, but seven weeks later he exchanged with Rodgers, who was his senior, and transferred his command to the *Congress*, the *Constitution* being sent to Lisbon to refit and recruit her crew, which was eighty men short. In February she returned to the blockade, and on the 24th of April captured a Tripolitan privateer with two Neapolitan prizes, and on May 22d she became the flagship of Commodore Rodgers, who succeeded Commodore Barron, forced by illness to return home.

On June 3, 1805, the treaty of peace was signed between the Dey of Algiers and the United States, and the *Constitution* and the batteries exchanged peaceful salutes. But it was not until Commodore Rodgers moved his whole squadron down before Tunis, on August 1st, and threatened the vengeance of his now powerful fleet, that the Bey of Tunis consented to sign the treaty of peace he had been putting off with dilatory negotiations.

The following May, Commodore Rodgers gave up the command of the *Constitution* to Captain Hugh G. Campbell and returned home, but the ship was kept cruising in the Mediterranean until the following year, when she sailed for the United States, arriving in Boston in the fall of 1807, but was at once sent around

to New York, where she went out of commission for nearly two years.

In August, 1809, Commodore John Rodgers took the *Constitution* as the flagship of the North Atlantic squadron, but a year later transferred his flag to the *President*, believing her a faster ship; and Isaac Hull was fortunate enough to return as flag-captain to the ship of which he had formerly been first lieutenant. During the year 1810–11, the *Constitution* cruised in home waters, and on August 1, 1811, she sailed from Annapolis to carry the new Minister, Hon. Joel Barlow, to France.

Our relations with England were already somewhat strained, and, as England and France were at war, the exchange of courtesies between the American and British naval officers were not of a particularly cordial character during the time the *Constitution* remained in English waters after leaving France. Indeed, at one time, in getting under way in St. Helen's Roads, the guns of the *Constitution* were cleared away, and everything was ready for action, as she stood out of the harbor accompanied by a British frigate. Captain Hull evidently did not intend by lack of precaution to be compelled to repeat the mortifying experience of the *Leopard* and the *Chesapeake*.

After a stormy passage home, the *Constitution* anchored off Old Point Comfort early in March, and the ship was sent up to the Washington Navy Yard for a thorough overhauling and recoppering. On June 18, 1812, war was declared against Great Britain, and three days later the *Constitution* sailed, passing out between the capes of Chesapeake Bay on July 12th.

On the seventeenth, at 2 P.M., four sail were sighted to the northward, heading toward the New Jersey

COMMODORE ISAAC HULL, U.S.N.
From the painting by Gilbert Stuart

coast, which Hull supposed to be Commodore Rodgers's squadron. At four o'clock the wind shifted, and the *Constitution* steered for the last ship sighted. This subsequently proved to be the *Guerrière*, 38, Captain Dacres. By this time the other four sail were made out to be three ships and a brig; they bore N.N.W., and were all on the starboard tack, apparently in company. The wind now became very light, and the *Constitution* hauled up her mainsail. The ship in the eastern board, however, had so far altered her position by six o'clock as to bear E.N.E., the wind having hitherto been fair for her to close, but at a quarter-past six the wind came out light from the southward, bringing the American ship to windward. The *Constitution* now wore round with her head to the eastward, set her light studdingsails and staysails, and at half-past seven beat to quarters and cleared for action, with the intention of speaking the nearest vessel.

The wind continued very light at the southward, and the two vessels were slowly closing until 8 P.M. At ten o'clock the *Constitution* shortened sail, and immediately afterwards showed the private signal of the day. After keeping the lights aloft nearly an hour, and getting no answer from the *Guerrière*, the *Constitution*, at a quarter-past eleven, lowered the signal, and made sail again, hauling aboard her starboard tacks. During the whole of the middle watch the wind was very light, from the southward and westward. Just as the morning watch was called, the *Guerrière* tacked, then wore entirely round, threw up a rocket, and fired two guns. As the day opened, three sail were discovered on the starboard quarter of the *Constitution*, and three more astern. At 5 A.M. a fourth vessel was seen astern.

This was the squadron of Commodore Broke, which had been gradually closing with the American frigate during the night, and was now just out of gunshot. As the ships slowly varied their positions, when the mists were entirely cleared away the *Constitution* had two frigates on her lee quarter, and a ship-of-the-line, two frigates, a brig, and a schooner astern. The names of the enemy's ships have already been given, but the brig was the *Nautilus*, and the schooner another prize. All the strangers had English colors flying. It now fell quite calm, and in this perilous position the *Constitution* hoisted out her boats and sent them ahead to tow, with a view of keeping the ship out of the range of the enemy's shot. At the same time she whipped up one of the gun-deck guns to the spar-deck, and ran it out aft, as a stern-chaser, getting a long 18 off the forecastle also for a similar purpose. Two more of the 24's below were run out of the cabin windows, though it was found necessary to cut away some of the woodwork of the stern frame in order to make room.

By six o'clock the wind, which continued very light and baffling, came out from the northward of west, when the ship's head was got round to the southward, and all the light canvas that would draw was set. Soon after, the nearest frigate, the *Shannon*, opened with her bow guns, and continued firing for about ten minutes, but, perceiving she could not reach the *Constitution*, she ceased. At half-past six Captain Hull sounded in twenty-six fathoms, when, finding that the enemy was likely to close, as he had put the boats of two ships on one in towing, and was also favored by a little more air than the *Constitution*, all the spare rope fit for the purpose was payed down into the cutters, bent on, and a kedge was run out near half a mile ahead, and let

go. At a signal given, the crew clapped on and walked away with the ship, overrunning and tripping the kedge as she came up with the end of the line. While this was doing, another kedge was carried ahead, and the frigate glided away from her pursuers before they discovered the manner in which it was done. It was not long, however, before the enemy resorted to the same expedient. At half-past seven the *Constitution* got a light breeze, when she set her ensign and fired a shot at the *Shannon*, the nearest ship astern. At eight it fell calm again, and further recourse was had to the boats and the kedges, the enemy's vessels having a light air, and drawing ahead, towing, sweeping, and kedging. By nine o'clock the nearest frigate, the *Shannon*, on which the English had put most of their boats in towing was closing fast, and there was every prospect, notwithstanding the steadiness and activity of the American crew, that the *Shannon* would get near enough to cripple the *Constitution*, when her capture by the rest of the squadron would be inevitable. At this trying moment the best spirit prevailed in the ship. Everything was stoppered aloft, and Captain Hull was not without hopes, even should he be forced into action, of throwing the *Shannon* astern by his fire, and of continuing to maintain his distance from the other British vessels. It was evident that the enemy could not tow very near, as it would have been easy to sink his boats with the stern guns of the *Constitution*, and not a man in the American ship showed a disposition to despondency; officers and men relieved each other regularly at the work, and while the officers threw themselves down on the decks to get short naps, the crew slept at their guns.

This was one of the most critical moments of the

chase. The *Shannon* was fast closing, while the *Guerrière* was almost as near on the larboard quarter. An hour promised to bring the struggle to an issue, when suddenly, at nine minutes past nine, a light air from the southward struck the American ship, bringing her to windward. The beautiful manner in which this advantage was improved excited admiration even in the enemy. As the breeze was seen coming, the *Constitution's* sails were trimmed, and as soon as she was under command she was brought close up to the wind, on the larboard tack; the boats were all dropped in alongside; those that belonged to the davits were run up, while the others were just lifted clear of the water by purchases on the spare outboard spars, where they were in readiness to be used at a moment's notice. As the ship came by the wind, she brought the *Guerrière* nearly on her lee beam, when that frigate opened a fire from her broadside. While the shot of this vessel was falling just short of them, the crew of the *Constitution* were hoisting up their boats with as much steadiness as if the duty was being performed in a friendly port. In about an hour, however, it fell calm again, when Captain Hull ordered a quantity of the water started, to lighten the ship. More than two thousand gallons were pumped out, and the boats were sent ahead again to tow. The enemy now put nearly all his boats on the *Shannon*, the nearest ship astern; and a few hours of prodigious exertion followed, the crew of the *Constitution* being compelled to supply the place of numbers by their activity and zeal. The ships were kept close by the wind, and everything that would draw was set, and the *Shannon* was slowly but steadily forging ahead. About noon of this day there was a little relaxation from labor, owing to the

ESCAPE OF THE "CONSTITUTION" FROM THE BRITISH SQUADRON

occasional occurrence of cat's-paws, and, by watching them closely, the ship was urged through the water. But at quarter-past twelve the boats were again sent ahead, and the toilsome work of towing and kedging was renewed.

At one o'clock a strange sail was discovered nearly to leeward. At this moment the four frigates of the enemy were about one point on the lee quarter of the *Constitution*, at long gunshot, the *Africa* and the two prizes being on the lee beam. As the wind was constantly baffling, any moment might have brought a change, and placed the enemy to windward. At seven minutes before two, the *Belvidera*, then the nearest ship, began to fire with her bow guns, and the *Constitution* opened with her stern-chasers, but it was found dangerous to use the main-deck guns, the transoms having so much rake, the windows being so high and the guns so short that every explosion lifted the upper deck, and threatened to blow out the stern frame. Finding, moreover, that his shot did little or no execution, Captain Hull ordered the firing to cease at half-past two o'clock.

For several hours the enemy's frigates were now within gunshot, sometimes towing and kedging, and at other times endeavoring to close with the puffs of air that occasionally passed. At seven in the evening, the boats of the *Constitution* were again ahead, the ship steering S. W. ½ W., with an air so light as to be almost imperceptible. At half-past seven she sounded in twenty-four fathoms. For hours the same toilsome work was going on, until a little before eleven, when a light air from the southward struck the ship, and the boats instantly dropped alongside, hooked on, and were all run up, with the exception of the first cutter.

The topgallant-studdingsails and -staysails were set as soon as possible, and for about half an hour the crew caught a little rest. But at midnight it fell nearly calm again, though neither the pursuers nor the pursued had recourse to the boats, probably from an unwillingness to disturb their crews.

At 2 A.M., it was observed on board the *Constitution* that the *Guerrière* had forged ahead, and was again off their lee beam. At this time the topgallant-studding-sails were taken in.

In this manner passed the night, and on the morning of the next day, it was found that three of the enemy's frigates were within long gunshot on the lee-quarter, and the other at about the same distance on the lee beam. The *Africa* and the prizes were much farther to leeward. A little after daylight, the *Guerrière*, having drawn ahead sufficiently to be forward of the *Constitution's* beam, tacked, when the American ship did the same in order to preserve her position to windward. An hour later the *Æolus* passed on the contrary tack so near that it was thought by some who observed the movement, that she ought to have opened her fire; but, as that vessel was merely a 12-pounder frigate, and was still at a considerable distance, it is quite probable her commander acted judiciously. By this time there was sufficient wind to induce Captain Hull to hoist in his first cutter.

The scene on the morning of this day was very beautiful, the weather was mild and lovely, the sea smooth as a pond, and there was quite wind enough to remove the necessity of any of the extraordinary means of getting ahead that had been so freely used during the previous eight-and-forty hours. All the English vessels had got on the same tack with the

Constitution again, and the five frigates were clouds of canvas, from their trucks to the water. Including the American ship, eleven sail were in sight, and, shortly after, a twelfth appeared to windward, that was soon ascertained to be an American merchantman. But the enemy was too intent on the *Constitution* to regard anything else, and though it would have been easy to capture the ships to leeward no attention appears to have been paid to them. With a view, however, to deceive the ship to windward the English frigates hoisted American colors, when Captain Hull shrewdly set an English ensign, by way of warning the stranger to keep aloof.

Until ten o'clock the *Constitution* was making every preparation for carrying sail hard should it become necessary, and she sounded in twenty-five fathoms. At noon the wind fell again, though it was found that while the breeze lasted she had gained on all the enemy's ships; more, however, on some than others. The nearest vessel now was the *Belvidera*, exactly in the wake of the *Constitution*, distant about two and a half miles, bearing W.N.W. The nearest frigate to leeward, bore N. by. W. ½ W., distant three or three and a half miles; the two other frigates were on the lee-quarter, distant about five miles, and the *Africa* was hull down to leeward, on the opposite tack.

This was a vast improvement on the conditions of the day previous, and it allowed the officers and men to catch a little rest, though no one left the decks. At meridian the wind began to blow a pleasant breeze, and the sound of the water rippling under the bows of the vessel was again heard. From this moment the noble old ship slowly drew ahead of all her pursuers, the sails being watched and tended in the best manner

that consummate seamanship could dictate, until 4 P.M., when the *Belvidera* was more than four miles astern, and the other vessels were thrown behind in the same proportion, though the wind had again become very light.

In this manner both parties kept passing ahead and to windward as fast as circumstances would allow, profiting by every change, and resorting to all the means of forcing vessels through the water, that are known to seamen. At a little before seven, however, there was every appearance of a heavy squall, accompanied by rain, when the *Constitution* prepared to meet it with the coolness and discretion she had displayed throughout the whole affair. The crew were stationed, and everything was kept fast to the last moment, when, just before the squall struck the ship, the order was given to clew up and clew down. All the light canvas was furled, a second reef was taken in the mizzentopsail, and the ship was brought under short sail in an incredibly little time. The English vessels, observing this, began to let go and haul down without waiting for the wind, and when they were shut in by the rain they were steering in different directions to avoid the force of the expected squall. The *Constitution*, on the other hand, no sooner got its weight than she sheeted home and hoisted her fore- and maintopgallantsails, and while the enemy probably believed her to be borne down by the pressure of the wind, on steering free she was flying away from them, an easy bowline, at the rate of eleven knots.

In a little less than an hour after the squall struck the ship it had entirely passed to leeward, and a sight was again obtained of the enemy. The *Belvidera*, the nearest vessel, had altered her bearings in that short

period two points more to leeward, and she was a long way astern. The next nearest vessel was still farther to leeward, and more distant, while the two remaining frigates were fairly hull down. The *Africa* was barely visible on the horizon!

All apprehension of the enemy now ceased, though sail was carried to increase the distance and to preserve the weather-gage. At half-past ten the wind backed farther to the southward, when the *Constitution*, which had been steering free for some time, took in her lower studdingsails. At eleven the enemy fired two guns, and the nearest ship could just be discerned. As the wind baffled and continued light, the enemy still persevered in the chase, but at daylight the nearest vessel was hull down astern and to leeward. Under the circumstances it was deemed prudent to use every exertion to lose sight of the English frigates, and, the wind falling light, the *Constitution's* sails were wet down, from the skysails to the courses. The good effects of this were soon visible, as, at 6 A.M., the topsails of the enemy's nearest vessels were beginning to dip. At a quarter-past eight the English ships all hauled to the northward and eastward, fully satisfied by a trial that had lasted nearly three days and as many nights, under all the circumstances that can attend naval manœuvres, from reefed topsails to kedging, that they had no hope of overtaking their enemy.

Thus terminated a chase that has become historical in the American navy for its length, closeness, and activity. On the part of the English, there were manifested much perseverance and seamanship, a ready imitation, and a strong desire to get alongside of their enemy. But the glory of the affair was carried off by

the officers and crew of the *Constitution*. Throughout all the trying circumstances of the arduous struggle this noble frigate, which had so lately been the subject of the sneers of the English critics, maintained the high character of a man-of-war. Even when pressed upon the hardest, nothing was hurried, confused, or slovenly, but the utmost steadiness, order, and discipline reigned in the ship. A cool, discreet, and gallant commander was nobly sustained by his officers; and there cannot be a doubt that, had the enemy succeeded in getting any one of their frigates fairly under the fire of the American ship, she would have been very roughly handled. The escape itself is not so much a matter of admiration as the manner in which it was effected. A little water was pumped out, it is true; and perhaps this was necessary in order to put a vessel fresh from port on a level, in light winds and calms, with ships that had been cruising some time; but not an anchor was cut away, not a boat stove, nor a gun lost. The steady man-of-war-like style in which the *Constitution* took in all her boats, as occasion offered, the order and rapidity with which she kedged, and the vigilant seamanship with which she was braced up and eased off extorted admiration among the more liberal of her pursuers. In this affair, the ship, no less than those who worked her, gained a high reputation, if not with the world generally, at least with those who perhaps as seldom err in their nautical criticisms as any people living.

The English relinquished the pursuit at 8 A.M., and at half-past eight, the *Constitution*, discovering a vessel on her starboard bow, made sail in chase; at three quarters past nine brought to, and spoke an American brig; at ten made sail again in chase of another ves-

sel on the lee bow, which also proved to be an American, bound in. At meridian hoisted in the boat used in boarding, took a second reef in the topsails, and stood to the eastward, the ship going in to Boston near the middle of the same month.[1]

A few days after the chase of the *Constitution*, the English squadron separated, the *Africa* returning to port with the prisoners and prizes, and the frigates shaping their courses in different directions in the hope that the ship which had avoided them so carefully when in company might be less averse to meeting either singly.

In this successful escape of the *Constitution* from five British ships Captain Hull displayed the admirable seamanship and fertility of resource for which he was always noted. Captain Byron, of the *Belvidera*, in a letter to Captain Broke, of the *Shannon*, says: "Nothing can exceed my mortification from the extraordinary escape of the American frigate, and I am likewise much concerned it should fall so heavily on Dacres."

If that writer could have looked into the future one short month he would have been yet more "concerned" for Dacres and the *Guerrière*.

After his notable escape from the British squadron Hull made for the eastward, past the coast of Nova Scotia at a point near Cape Race, capturing and destroying two British merchantmen on the way. On August 15th, he recaptured an American brig with an English prize crew on board, and on the 16th he chased and overhauled an armed brig which proved to be the privateer *Decatur* of Salem. In his endeavor to escape

[1] This graphic sketch of the famous escape of the *Constitution* from an English fleet is taken, with slight changes, from Cooper's *Naval History*.

from the supposed English man-of-war the captain of the privateer threw all his guns overboard; but, notwithstanding his loss, he good-naturedly gave Hull the information that he had sighted a British frigate to the southward the day before.

The *Constitution* was at once kept to the southward, and on the afternoon of the nineteenth, in latitude 41° 42′ N., longitude 55° 48′ W., a sail was sighted bearing E.S.E.; there was a fresh leading breeze, and Hull bore away for her. An hour later she was made out to be a frigate by the wind on the starboard tack. She was the *Guerrière* and had left the squadron off New York, bound for Halifax, where she was going for repairs.

Both ships kept their course, and by five o'clock, when but two miles apart, the *Constitution* took in all light sails, hauled up her courses, and beat to quarters. The *Guerrière* hoisted English colors, backed her mainsail, and pluckily waited for her enemy to close. At 5.05 she fired her starboard battery without hitting the *Constitution*, and at once wore round and fired her port battery, two shots taking effect.

The *Constitution* now hoisted an ensign and jack at each masthead and began firing her bow guns as they came into bearing. For three quarters of an hour the fight was kept up, the *Guerrière* wearing to fire a broadside, and the *Constitution* yawing to avoid being raked, and firing her bow guns. As this did not prove effectual Hull wore round, set the maintopgallantsail and headed down for his enemy, who bore up with the wind on the port quarter.

Moses Smith, a survivor of the *Constitution's* crew in this fight, in his *Naval Scenes in the Last War*, graphically describes the scene on the gun-deck as the two ships approached each other, the *Guerrière* firing,

the *Constitution*, by Hull's orders, reserving her firing. He says:

Hull passed forward and aft among the men at the guns, stripped to the waist and eager to begin the fight. "Men," he said, "now do your duty. Your officers cannot have entire command over you now. Each man must do all in his power for his country. No firing at random. Let every man look well to his aim." Just then a shot struck the *Constitution's* bulwarks and threw a shower of splinters over the men of the first division on the gun-deck.

Hull went up to the quarter-deck, and Lieutenant Morris soon came to him and reported, "The enemy has killed two men. Shall we return the fire?" "No sir," replied Hull. Morris came again saying, "Sir, they have fired again and killed two more men—shall we fire?" "No, sir," was the brief reply.

A third time Morris came aft "wishing to know whether they might *now* fire?" Hull hesitated a moment, and, glancing at the *Guerrière*, then about forty yards distant, replied, "Yes, sir, you may now fire!"

The word was passed, and a broadside followed at close range that made the old *Constitution* tremble. As Hull watched its effect upon the enemy he slapped his white knee-breeches and exclaimed—"By ———, that vessel is ours!"

The *Constitution* now closed to windward, both ships keeping up a heavy fire, and in ten minutes from the time the American frigate's broadside guns came into play the *Guerrière's* mizzenmast fell to starboard, knocking a large hole in her counter. As it fell one of the American sailors shouted to a comrade, "Damn it, Jack! we 've made a brig of her; before we get through we 'll have her a sloop!"

The *Constitution* soon ranged ahead off the port beam of the enemy, keeping up a very severe fire at

two hundred yards, and at 6.30 Hull put the helm hard aport to luff across the *Guerrière's* bow and rake her, but as his braces had been shot away the ship did not swing quickly but shot up into the wind and got sternway. But two broadsides were fired when the English ship's bowsprit fouled the lee mizzen-rigging of the *Constitution*. Lieutenant Morris attempted to pass a lashing to secure the bowsprit where it was, when he was shot through the body and fell on deck. Lieutenant William S. Brush, of the marines, was killed at the same time. The deadly musket-fire that was kept up prevented either side from boarding, although both were prepared to do so. As the *Constitution's* sails filled she shot ahead, and just at this time both the fore and mainmast of the *Guerrière* went by the board, leaving her a helpless wreck, and at half-past six Captain Dacres fired a gun to leeward.

Captain Hull now stood off a short distance to reeve new braces, secure his masts, and ascertain the condition of his own ship, and by seven o'clock he tacked, and, as the enemy's flag was still flying from the stump of the mizzenmast, he ran under the *Guerrière's* lee, when Captain Dacres at once struck his flag.

Lieutenant George C. Read, who went on board to take possession, found the ship in a terrible condition. Masts and spars were hanging over the side, guns were dismounted, the decks were littered with dead and wounded, and the ship was sinking. Hull sent boats at once to remove the prisoners, with a surgeon's mate to assist the wounded.

When the boat returned with Lieutenant Read and Captain Dacres, Hull met his brave antagonist at the gangway and assisted him over the side, saying,

BATTLE BETWEEN THE "CONSTITUTION" AND THE "GUERRIÈRE," AUGUST 19, 1812

From the drawing by G. White

"Dacres, give me your hand, I know you are hurt." As the English officer offered his sword, Hull waved it aside and replied, "No, no, I will not take a sword from one who knows so well how to use it; but I will trouble you for that hat," he added, smiling.

This referred to a wager of a hat made by Dacres at a meeting with Hull before hostilities began, upon the outcome of a possible hostile meeting between their two ships.

The entry in the *Constitution's* log reads: "The second cutter returned bringing Captain Dacres of *formerly* his Brittanick Majesty's ship *Guerrière*."

An examination of the prize proving that she could not be carried into port, the *Guerrière* was set on fire on the following day, and soon blew up.

It is said that just before setting fire to the *Guerrière*, Hull asked Captain Dacres if there was anything he would particularly like to save. "Yes," he replied, "my mother's Bible, which I have carried with me for years." Hull at once sent for it, and this was the beginning of a friendship between the two captains that lasted until Hull's death in 1843.

Years afterward Hull, as a commodore, met Dacres as an admiral at Gibraltar, and at a dinner given to the American on board the British flagship Dacres showed Mrs. Hull this same Bible which her husband had saved. In 1837 Hull and Dacres, the latter short and stout, the other tall and thin, were often seen, arm-in-arm, walking through the streets of Rome together.

COMPARATIVE FORCE

	Tons	Guns	Broadside Weight	Men	Loss
Constitution	1576	54	684	456	14
Guerrière...	1338	50	556	272	79

Although undoubtedly the *Constitution* was the larger and heavier ship, Captain Dacres had put himself on record as ready to meet one of her class in battle. He had written on the logbook of an American merchantman as follows:

> Captain Dacres, commander of His Britannic Majesty's frigate *Guerrière* of forty-four guns, presents his compliments to Commodore Rodgers of the United States frigate *President*, and will be very happy to meet him or any other American frigate of equal force to the *President* off Sandy Hook, for the purpose of having a few minutes tête-à-tête.

The *Constitution* sailed for Boston, where she arrived August 30th, and great rejoicing followed the news of this victory in the first naval fight of the war. It at once changed the feeling of depression caused by the recent surrender of General Hull in Canada to the greatest exultation. Captain Hull and his officers were entertained in Faneuil Hall at a public dinner, and a procession marched up State Street in their honor. Congress voted $50,000 prize money for the officers and men, with a gold medal for Captain Hull commemorating the action, and silver medals for the other officers, while the citizens of Philadelphia presented Hull with a service of plate.

The London *Times* said:

> It is not merely that an English frigate has been taken after what we are free to confess may be called a brave resistance, but that it has been taken by a new enemy—an enemy unaccustomed to such triumphs, and likely to be rendered confident by them. He must be a weak politician who does not see how important the first triumph is in giving a tone and character to the war.

Hull, having now had the *Constitution* for two years, generously offered to give up the command of the frigate to Commodore Bainbridge that he might have his opportunity, and on September 15th Bainbridge took command of the ship, to the intense annoyance of her crew, who were devoted to Hull, and who expressed their feelings so openly that a number of them were transferred from the ship for mutinous behavior.

As has already been noted in a previous chapter the *Constitution* got to sea October 27, 1812, in company with the *Hornet*, and after touching at the island of Fernando de Noronha arrived off San Salvador, December 13th. After fruitless attempts to arrange for a combat between the British *Bonne Citoyenne* and the *Hornet*, Bainbridge sailed for a cruise off the coast, and at nine o'clock on the morning of December 29th, when about thirty miles offshore, with the wind N.E., he sighted two sail to the northward rather inshore, coming down before the wind. The *Constitution* was then heading offshore on the port tack.

An hour later one was seen to be a ship standing inshore, the other a frigate heading directly for the *Constitution*. Bainbridge tacked to the northward and westward to draw the frigate offshore and away from her consort, and made the private signals, which were not answered, and, as the other ship was flying signals he could not understand, he was confident she was an enemy.

For nearly two hours the two ships stood to the eastward on parallel courses, and just before noon the strange frigate showed English colors, while the *Constitution* displayed the American flag at the peak and main, with a jack at the fore. The *Java*, 38, as she proved to be, was bound from Spithead to the East

Indies, and on the previous day had captured the American ship *William*, which was then in company with her, with a prize crew on board.

At 1.30 P.M. Bainbridge, believing he had gained sufficient offing, headed the *Constitution* for the *Java*, took in his royals and mainsail, and tacked, the English ship being then a mile to windward on the *Constitution's* quarter. At two o'clock Bainbridge fired a gun ahead of the *Java*, and at once followed with a broadside. The English ship replied with a destructive fire, killing and wounding several of the *Constitution's* crew. A general action with round and grape commenced at 2.10, and the *Java*, forging ahead, kept away to cross the *Constitution's* bow, but the American wore, and thus brought the heads of both ships to the westward. The ships now drawing together, the *Java* again attempted to pass around the *Constitution's* bow, and the two ships wore together, bringing their heads to the eastward, the American still to leeward.

For the third time the *Java* attempted to cross the *Constitution's* bow, but again failed. Both vessels now ran off free, with the wind on the quarter, the English ship still to windward, when at 2.55 the *Java* attempted to close, and, running down on the *Constitution's* quarter, her jib-boom ran into the American's mizzen-rigging, where she was exposed to a raking fire. The head of the *Java's* bowsprit was soon shot away, and in a few minutes her foremast went by the board, the ships then separating.

The *Constitution* now shot ahead, keeping away to avoid being raked, and, wearing, luffed up under the *Java's* quarter, then, wearing again, the two frigates came alongside of each other, and engaged yard-arm

and yard-arm. In a very few minutes the *Java's* mizzenmast fell, leaving only the mainmast standing with the main-yard shot away in the slings.

At 4.05, the fire from the *Java* having ceased, the *Constitution* hauled aboard her tacks, luffed across her antagonist's bow, and passed to windward under topsails, courses, spanker, and jib, and passed an hour in repairing damages. Then, seeing that the *Java's* flag was still flying, Bainbridge wore around and stood across the Englishman's bow, when the *Java* hauled down her colors.

First Lieutenant Parker was sent on board, and found the English ship was a riddled, dismantled wreck, while her loss was twenty-two killed and 102 wounded. Among these last was her commander, Captain Henry Lambert, mortally wounded, who died three days later at Bahia. The *Constitution* had only twelve killed and twenty-two wounded. Early in the action Commodore Bainbridge was wounded by a musket-ball in the hip, and later by a piece of copper langrage in the thigh, which was not extracted for several days. Notwithstanding these painful wounds, however, he kept the deck and directed the fight throughout. Lieutenant Alwyn, a young officer of great promise, who had been promoted for his gallantry in the action with the *Guerrière*, died of his wounds on January 28th.

After Captain Lambert had been removed from the *Java*, and was lying on a cot on the quarter-deck of the *Constitution*, Commodore Bainbridge approached him, supported by two of his officers, and, presenting the gallant Lambert his side-arms, said, with unconcealed emotion, "I return your sword, my dear sir, with my sincerest wish that you may recover and wear

it as you have hitherto done, with honor to yourself and to your country."

The *Java* was formerly the French frigate *Renommée*, captured off Madagascar May 14, 1811, by the British frigate *Phœbe*, 36, after an action of several hours, during which the French lost 93 out of a crew of 470, including her Commander, Captain M. Roquebert.

Although the *Java* might have been carried into a port near at hand, Bainbridge felt that it would not be safe to take her into a Brazilian port, where they were notoriously unfriendly to the Americans, so, after lying by her two or three days, he removed her crew and blew her up, first removing her wheel, which he needed to replace his own, shot away in the fight.

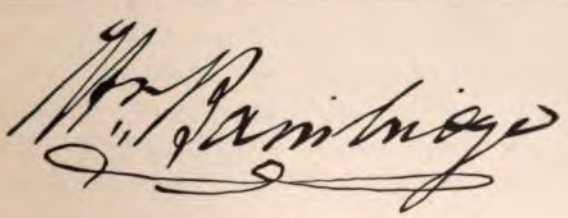
Some years afterward, when the *Constitution* was in the Mediterranean, some English officers, after going over the ship, expressed their admiration of her, wondering, however, where everything else was so attractive, that her wheel should be so clumsy. The lieutenant who was acting as *cicerone* explained to the visitors that the wheel was the only thing that was not American about the *Constitution*.

COMPARATIVE FORCE

	Tons	Guns	Weight Metal	Men	Loss	Time
Constitution....	1576	54	684	475	34	2 hours
Java.....	1340	49	576	426	150	10 minutes

The London *Times*, in commenting on the action, said:

The loss of a single frigate by us, it is true, is but a small one; when viewed as part of the British navy it is almost nothing; yet under all the circumstances of the two countries to which the vessels belonged, we know not of any



COMMODORE WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE, U.S.N.

From the painting by Gilbert Stuart

calamity of twenty times its amount that might have been attended with more serious consequences to the worsted party.

The *Java* had on board as passengers Lieutenant-General Hislop and staff, who were paroled and landed with the *Java's* crew at São Salvador. On parting, General Hislop presented Bainbridge with a gold-mounted sword as a token of appreciation of the kindness shown to him and his suite on board the *Constitution*. Captain Lambert was carried on shore, where he died.

On January 6th Bainbridge sailed for home, leaving the *Hornet*, under Captain Lawrence, still blockading the *Bonne Citoyenne*. The *Constitution* arrived in Boston February 28, 1813, and the citizens were wild with delight at this second victory of "Old Ironsides" within five months. Again her citizens marched in procession up State Street, and a second dinner was spread in Faneuil Hall in honor of a victory for the *Constitution*. Congress once more voted thanks, and gold and silver medals, with another $50,000 for the destruction of the *Java*.

The British Admiralty, finding the loss of three frigates within half a year altogether too much for their equanimity, issued orders that no 18-pounder frigate in future should engage a frigate with 24-pounders, if the action could be avoided. They also proceeded at once to cut down a number of line-of-battle ships to make them matches for our heavy frigates.

The *Constitution* was thoroughly prepared at the Charlestown Navy Yard, Captain Charles Stewart relieved Commodore Bainbridge in command, and after shipping an almost entirely new crew and receiving

a fresh detail of officers, the old ship sailed on the last day of the year 1813 on a cruise to the Windward Islands.

On February 15, 1814, on the Guiana coast, Captain Stewart captured and destroyed the British 14-gun schooner *Pictou*, with a crew of seventy-five men. On the 24th he fell in with the British frigate *Pique*, 36, and chased her through the Mona Passage, but she escaped during the night. Warned by previous experience, her captain had received positive orders from the Admiralty to avoid an unequal contest, and he wisely obeyed orders when the *Constitution* hove in sight.

This cruise was only moderately successful, the only captures being the ship *Lovely Ann*, ten guns; the schooner *Pictou*, fourteen guns, and the schooner *Phœnix* and brig *Catherine*, both destroyed. On the morning of April 3d, while heading for Portsmouth, the wind shifted to the northeast, and Stewart decided to make the port of Boston. By eight o'clock the wind had died away, when two square-rigged vessels, evidently men-of-war, were sighted to the E.S.E., coming up with a fresh breeze. The *Constitution* was then becalmed about three miles southeast of Thatcher's Island.

By ten o'clock she caught the wind from S.E., when the two British 38-gun frigates, *Tenedos*, Captain Parker, and *Junon*, Captain Upton, were but three and a half miles distant to windward. As Stewart had no pilot on board, he did not dare to risk taking the channel between Baker's Island and the Misery and running for Salem, so he stood for Halfway Rock, keeping in deep water. Meanwhile he lightened ship by throwing overboard spare spars, provisions, and

prize goods, and starting his water and pumping it out. Professor Ira N. Hollis, in his *Frigate "Constitution,"* is authority for the statement that it was only when the whiskey in the spirit-room had been started and pumped overboard that the old *Constitution* reached her proper trim, and began to draw ahead of her pursuers.

Be that as it may, by noon the *Constitution* rounded Halfway Rock and squared away for Marblehead, and by one o'clock she had anchored under the guns of Fort Sewall, the *Tenedos* and *Junon* lying six miles outside. Fearing the frigates might come in and attack the *Constitution*, a number of guns were sent over from Salem, and the Marblehead battalion of artillery were under arms, while Commodore Bainbridge, to whom an express had been sent, despatched assistance from the Charlestown Navy Yard, and the New England Guards started to march from Boston to render aid to the threatened ship, but their assistance was not needed, as the British frigates sailed away that afternoon. James says that Captain Parker was anxious to follow the American frigate in, but the *Tenedos* was recalled by a signal from the *Junon*. Three days later the *Constitution* ran in to Boston Harbor, where she was closely blockaded for eight and a half months by the British squadron.

During this time there were constant reports that the British were preparing for a combined land and naval attack upon Boston, with a view of destroying the navy yard at that port, with its large stores of military supplies, as well as the line-of-battle ship *Independence*, then at the navy yard in a partly finished condition. Commodore Bainbridge therefore prudently made every preparation for the defence of the station.

The *Constitution* was anchored so as to cover the entrance to the harbor, and near her the *Independence* was moored with a few guns hastily mounted. Several shore batteries were also erected. When the British ships appeared below in force, Bainbridge applied to the Adjutant-General of the Commonwealth, asking the co-operation of the State. To this a committee appointed by the Governor modestly suggested that the naval ships should be moved down below Fort Warren, where the enemy could fight it out with them without danger to the city. This suggestion Commodore Bainbridge, who had so lately been fêted by the citizens of Boston after his capture of the *Java*, very properly declined to consider.

In December, the British blockading squadron included the *Newcastle*, 50, *Acasta*, 40, and the 18-gun brig-sloop *Arab*, but on the eighteenth of the month, the ships being temporarily absent, Stewart put to sea and succeeded in getting "Old Ironsides" once more on open water. The ship was at once headed to the southeast, and on December 24th, when to the eastward of the Bermudas, the brig *Nelson* was captured, and by a misunderstanding of orders she was scuttled and sunk on the twenty-sixth. Later, while cruising on the coast of Portugal, the ship *Susannah*, with a valuable cargo, was captured on February 16th off Lisbon and sent to New York.

On the morning of February 20th, by an unaccountable impulse, as Stewart afterward explained, the Commodore ordered the helm put up and ran the ship off southwest fifty or sixty miles. That afternoon at one o'clock, in latitude 33° 44′ N., longitude 14° 39′ W., a sail was seen two points off the port bow, and shortly afterward another sail was made about ten miles to the

westward of the first. Both were standing close-hauled to the northward, on the starboard tack. The first vessel seen was the British frigate-built ship *Cyane*, Captain Gordon Thomas Falcon; the other the ship-sloop *Levant*, Captain the Honorable George Douglass.

At 4 P.M. the *Levant* signalled the *Cyane* that the strange sail was an enemy and ran down before the wind to join her companion. The *Constitution* at once set lower topmast, topgallant and royal studdingsails and bore up in chase. A half-hour later her mainroyal-mast carried away, but another was immediately sent up, and by five o'clock she opened fire with her bow-chasers, but as the shot fell short and hindered her progress Stewart soon ceased firing.

At 5.30, the *Cyane* spoke the *Levant*, and Captain Douglass declared he should fight the American frigate, but, seemingly desirous of postponing the engagement until night, the English ships hauled close to the wind on the starboard tack, endeavoring to work to windward. The *Constitution*, however, was coming fast down on them, and, failing to outwind her, the *Cyane* and *Levant* both stripped to fighting canvas and formed in head and stern line about a cable's length apart on the starboard tack.

At six o'clock they ran up red British ensigns, and the *Constitution* showed her colors as she ranged down to windward of the two ships and opened the combat by dropping a shot between them. The broadside firing from all three ships now became general at three hundred yards' range, so close that the American marines were kept busily engaged during the entire action.

For a quarter of an hour this fire was kept up until a great body of smoke had enveloped the ships, shutting out the combatants from each other, and for a few

minutes the firing ceased. When at last the smoke lifted and the moon came out, the *Levant* was seen dead to leeward on the port beam of the *Constitution*, while the *Cyane* was luffing up on her port quarter. Stewart gave the sloop a broadside, then braced his main and mizzentopsails aback, shook all forward, let fly the jib-sheet, and backed astern, under cover of his own smoke, until he was abreast of the corvette, forcing her to fill to avoid being raked, and at the same time poured a heavy fire into her.

The *Levant* now bore up to the aid of her consort, but Stewart filled, and, shooting ahead, fired two broadsides into her stern, when she at once made sail to get out of the combat, the *Cyane* gallantly drawing in to take the fire of the *Constitution;* but, as she attempted to wear, Stewart wore his ship short around and gave the *Cyane* a stern rake, receiving the Englishman's port broadside in his own bow. At 6.50, just forty minutes after the first gun was fired, Captain Falcon fired a lee gun and hoisted a light in token of surrender.

Second Lieutenant Hoffman was sent with a small crew to take possession, and at eight o'clock Stewart filled away for the *Levant*. Captain Douglass, having reeved new braces, hauled his wind and met the *Constitution* at 8.50, both ships exchanging broadsides. Finding, however, that his consort had been put out of action, he crowded sail to escape, but was soon overhauled by the *Constitution*, who opened with her starboard bow-chasers, and soon afterward the *Levant's* colors were hauled down and First Lieutenant Ballard was sent on board to take command.

The American loss in this fight was three killed and twelve wounded, three of these mortally. The

two British ships had nineteen killed and forty-two wounded.

COMPARATIVE FORCE

	Guns	Metal	Crew	Loss
Constitution.....	54	684	456	14
Cyane and *Levant*...	55	763	320	77

This was unquestionably one of the most brilliant naval battles on record for the force engaged; and the skill displayed by Captain Stewart in handling his ship against two brave and resourceful antagonists has perhaps never been excelled.

In a naval combat, where one ship is engaging two, it is a most unusual thing for the single ship to avoid being raked by one or the other of her antagonists. But in this fight the *Constitution* was not once subjected to a raking fire, while, on the contrary, she repeatedly raked both of her antagonists, backing and filling in the smoke of battle, and forcing the British ships down to leeward in a most brilliant series of manœuvres.

Five years before, in February, 1812, a French 44-gun frigate engaged the British ships *Rainbow*, 26, and *Avon*, 18, separately, and after a long battle all three of the combatants separated, and both French and English claim that the other fled; but Stewart fought his two opponents together and captured them both.

The next day was passed in refitting the prizes, and Captain Stewart then ran for Porto Praya, where he arrived on March 10th. He at once chartered a brig as a cartel, and put one hundred of his prisoners on board to get her ready for sea. Others were landed, but the work was delayed by a very heavy fog which hung low over the water. At noon on the twelfth, the upper sails of a large ship were discovered close in to the bay,

and immediately after two other large ships hove in sight standing in to the port.

When Lieutenant Shubrick reported the first ship to Captain Stewart, who was shaving in his cabin, he ordered him to get under way and run out to take a look at the stranger. But a moment later, when the other ships were seen, he ordered the cable cut and signal to be made to the *Cyane* and *Levant* to get under way. Stewart felt sure, if these were British ships, they would pay no respect to the neutrality of the port.

Within a quarter of an hour after the first ship was sighted, the *Constitution* was standing out of the harbor under topsails, closely followed by her prizes. The Portuguese batteries, manned, it was said, by the English prisoners sent on shore, treacherously opened on the American ships, but no harm was done by their badly directed fire.

The *Constitution* made sail as rapidly as possible, and, as the ships cleared the entrance close to East Point, they headed on the port tack to the eastward, passing within range of the nearest ship. The British fleet included the *Constitution's* old blockading enemies off Boston, the *Newcastle*, 50, and *Acasta*, 40, accompanied by the *Leander*, 50. Crossing topgallant-yards, Stewart made the best of his way on the port tack, closely followed by the three British frigates.

By 12.50 the *Constitution* had gained on her pursuers, but the *Cyane* had fallen so far astern and to leeward that Stewart signalled her to tack lest she be cut off. This was done and she ran off to the northwest, and at 2.35 was out of sight of all the ships, when, shaping her course for home, she reached America on April 10th.

At 1.45, the *Newcastle* opened on the *Constitution*, but her shot all fell short. By three o'clock the *Levant* had fallen to leeward so that Stewart signalled her to tack, which she did, when straightway all three British ships tacked in pursuit, abandoning the chase of the *Constitution*. The *Levant* ran in to the anchorage at Porto Praya and anchored within one hundred and fifty yards of a heavy battery, but, nevertheless, the English ships opened fire upon the sloop, and after fifteen minutes the colors of the *Levant* were hauled down to three heavy British frigates in a neutral port. This sacrifice of the *Levant* was a small price to pay for the safety of the *Constitution* and the *Cyane*, but the course of the English fleet in abandoning the chase of the *Constitution* was most severely and justly criticised by the English press.

The *Constitution* anchored in Maranham, April 2d, and landed her British prisoners, and she then sailed for Porto Rico, where, receiving positive information that the war had ended, Stewart sailed for home and anchored off the battery in New York on May 15, 1815, three months after the ratification of peace. Thirty days were allowed by the treaty for the cessation of hostilities in the eastern Atlantic, and as the *Cyane* was captured on February 20th, only three days after the ratification, she was retained in our service.

The arrival at New York of the *Constitution*, after her third successful contest with British ships-of-war, caused very general rejoicing, and Congress awarded Captain Stewart a sword of honor and a gold medal. The colors of the *Cyane* and *Levant* are still preserved as precious relics in the Naval Institute at Annapolis.

From 1815 to 1821 the *Constitution* was laid up at Boston, but on May 13, 1821, she sailed as the flagship

of Commodore Jacob Jones in the Mediterranean. During this cruise Lord Byron visited the ship. The cruise was a very quiet one, and in 1823 she returned to Boston, where she remained until, in 1826, she returned to the Mediterranean under the command of Captain Thomas Macdonough, who had been a midshipman in her more than twenty years before in those waters. Captain Macdonough was relieved by Captain Daniel T. Patterson in 1827, and during his command the *Constitution* was summoned to Greece to aid Dr. S. G. Howe of Boston in recovering a portion of a cargo of provisions sent out for the starving Greeks, that had been stolen. She returned to Boston in July, 1828, went out of commission, and the following year was surveyed and reported unseaworthy.

The estimated cost of repairs exceeding the total original cost of building the ship, the Secretary of the Navy, after consultation with the Naval Commissioners, decided to have "Old Ironsides" broken up or sold. This would undoubtedly have been done, had not young Oliver Wendell Holmes by fortunate chance seen in a newspaper that the *Constitution* was to be destroyed, and his muse was thus inspired to write for the Boston *Advertiser* the well-known lines, beginning:

> Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!

A great wave of patriotic sentiment swept over the country as the stirring poem was copied far and wide in the press, and the iconoclastic hand of the Secretary of the Navy was, happily, stayed. Congress readily voted a sufficient appropriation, and the old ship was the first vessel taken into the new dry dock just completed at the Boston Navy Yard. By a happy thought,

Captain Hull was then ordered to command the *Constitution*, and she was docked in the presence of Vice-President Van Buren on June 24, 1833. This was the first time the *Constitution* had been in a dry dock, and it was found that her keel was hogged and two and a half feet out of line, the result probably of her having stuck on the ways at her launching.

After a complete restoration, and just before sailing, the famous decapitation of her figure-head—which was a full-length figure of President Jackson—occurred.

The story of the removal of the Jackson head by Samuel W. Dewey, who sawed it off one dark night, has been told so often that it is unnecessary to repeat it here. After the *Constitution* went around to New York, the figure-head was repaired, and, after remaining forty years in its place, it was removed from the ship and is now at the Naval Academy. The *Constitution* sailed for Havre on March 16, 1834, to bring home Mr. Livingston, our Minister to France, arriving in New York, June 22d.

August 19, 1835, the *Constitution* returned to the Mediterranean as the flagship of Commodore Elliott. On a visit to Malta in the spring of 1836, Washington's birthday was duly observed, not only by the *Constitution*, but by fourteen British vessels in the harbor, all of whom dressed ship and fired salutes, while the American officers were most cordially received by their English hosts. The ship returned to Norfolk on August 1, 1838.

May 20, 1839, she sailed as the flagship of Commodore Alexander Claxton on the West Pacific station, returning to Norfolk in the autumn of 1841, under Captain Turner, who took command after Commodore Claxton's death, March 7, 1841. During the next two

years the *Constitution* was commanded by Captain Foxhall A. Parker and Commodore Charles Stewart, and on March 26, 1844, she was sent on a special cruise to the China seas, under Captain John Percival, known in the service through his numerous eccentricities as "mad Jack." During this cruise, while at Singapore, Commodore Chads, commanding the British fleet, went on board the *Constitution* to see the ship where he, as a lieutenant of the *Java*, had been a prisoner thirty-two years before. After circumnavigating the globe, the *Constitution* came home by the way of Cape Horn, reaching Boston, October 5, 1848, having sailed 52,279 miles in 495 days at sea, or an average of 106 miles a day for the entire time.

Again the old ship was laid up for two years, and then sailed under Captain John Gwynn, December 9, 1848, for her old cruising-ground in the Mediterranean as the flagship of Commodore W. C. Bolton. Captain Gwynn died on September 4, 1849, and was succeeded by Captain Thomas A. Conover, who brought the *Constitution* to New York, January 11, 1851.

December 22, 1852, the *Constitution* sailed for her last visit to the Mediterranean, under command of Captain John Rudd, as the flagship of Commodore Isaac Mayo. After two years' cruising on the coast of Africa she returned to Portsmorth, N. H., and went out of commission, never again to be sent to sea on active naval service. In 1860, the *Constitution* was sent to Annapolis for the use of the midshipmen, under command of Lieutenant-Commanding David D. Porter, who was detached after she had been moored at a wharf at the Naval Academy.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, it was deemed unsafe to leave the *Constitution* where she was, as Captain

George S. Blake, Superintendent of the Academy, wrote to the Navy Department that he had the most reliable information that it was the determination of many people in Maryland that the *Constitution* should be the first ship-of-war to hoist the flag of the Confederate States. As the ship was in a very defenceless condition, Captain Blake ordered Lieut. G. W. Rodgers to take her to New York the moment she was able to proceed to sea.

On the morning of April 21st, General Benjamin F. Butler very fortunately arrived from Havre de Grace with the 8th Massachusetts Regiment of Volunteers on board the steamer *Maryland*. With his ready consent, three companies, many of the men being Marblehead fishermen, were placed on board the *Constitution*, and the *Maryland* took her in tow. After grounding on Greenberry Point, she was finally kedged off, and, in tow of the *R. R. Cuyler*, with the *Harriet Lane* in company, the grand old ship was safely brought to New York three days later. After the removal of the Naval Academy to Newport, the *Constitution* was taken there for a training and practice ship.

By this prompt action of Captain Blake and the fortuitous arrival of General Butler's command of Massachusetts militia at the happy moment when they were so sorely needed, "Old Ironsides" was saved for the Union, and although, like the *Constellation*, her fighting days were forever ended, the loss of this historic ship to the enemy at that time would have been deemed a most unfortunate augury.

In August, 1865, after the close of the war, the *Constitution* was towed out of Newport under command of Commander Philip C. Johnson, but, disdaining the aid of steam, the old ship made such good headway

that the towlines were cast off, and she made her way to Annapolis under sail, during one watch reeling off thirteen and a half knots an hour.

For the next six years the *Constitution* remained at the wharf at the Naval Academy, and from November 5, 1867, to August 1, 1870, her commanding officer was Lieutenant-Commander George Dewey. In 1871 she was towed around to Philadelphia, and it was proposed to have her repaired in readiness for the Centennial Exposition of 1876, but she was not made ready in time.

In March, 1878, under command of Captain Oscar C. Badger, the *Constitution* was sent to Havre to carry goods sent to the Paris Exposition. After remaining nine months at that port, she sailed for home January 16th, and on the following night ran aground on the English coast off Ballard's Point. In this emergency British authorities generously sent a steam battle-ship to assist in getting their redoubtable old enemy afloat again, and she was docked at Portsmouth. Captain Badger sailed again on January 30, 1879, but the proverbial good fortune of the *Constitution* seemed to have deserted her, for in a heavy gale on February 14th, she twisted her rudder-head off, and was compelled to run before the wind for Lisbon, where she arrived February 19th. Again she went into dock, and did not sail for home until April 11th, reaching New York May 24th.

The *Constitution* was again assigned for service as a training ship for naval apprentices, in which useful line of work she continued under Captains F. H. Baker and O. F. Stanton, and Commander E. U. Shepard, cruising in the West Indies in winter, and as far north as Halifax, N. S., in summer. In January, 1882, the

Constitution went out of commission at New York, and in 1884 she was towed to Portsmouth, N. H., for use as a receiving ship.

In response to a very general request from citizens of Boston, the Secretary of the Navy ordered the *Constitution* back to her native city for the centennial anniversary of her launch, and she arrived in command of Commander S. W. Very, in tow of a tug on September 21, 1897. The entire North Atlantic fleet, including the *New York*, *Brooklyn*, *Iowa*, *Massachusetts*, and *Texas* were anchored in the harbor on October 21st to receive "Old Ironsides," while the Governor of Massachusetts, the Mayor of Boston, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and the junior Senator of the State delivered appropriate speeches in the Old South Church. The celebration was a very notable one, great enthusiasm being displayed, recalling, in a way, those other patriotic demonstrations fourscore years before when Captains Isaac Hull and William Bainbridge, coming home victorious, received the ovations of the citizens in Faneuil Hall.

As Professor Ira N. Hollis says, in closing his exhaustive book, *The Frigate "Constitution,"* upon which I have freely drawn in this sketch:

> The old craft now lies housed over and tenantless, except for the crowd of memories which people her decks. She has reached another stage in her existence demanding the assistance of every lover of his country to secure for her a long lease of life. By an Act of Congress, approved February 14, 1900, the Secretary of the Navy is authorized to restore her to the same condition as regards her hull and rigging as she was when in active service; provided that a sufficient sum of money to complete the work shall be raised through the agency of the Massachusetts State Society

of the United States Daughters of 1812. The amount required is estimated at $400,000, and the patriotic women having the business in charge will no doubt realize their hopes of seeing the old ship completely restored in the course of a few years.

CHAPTER VIII

THE "CONSTELLATION"

THE second of the six new cruisers, built under the Act of March 27, 1794, was the *Constellation*, constructed by David Stodert at Baltimore, and launched on September 7, 1797. She was 161 feet long, 40 feet beam, 1265 tons, and cost $314,212. She was rated as a 38-gun frigate, and carried twenty-eight 24-pound guns in the main-deck battery, and twelve 12-pound guns on the spar-deck. Like the other cruisers, the *Constellation* was delayed in being fitted out for service for want of suitable spars and guns, and it was not until June of the following year that she sailed under command of Captain Thomas Truxton, in company with the *Delaware*, 20, Captain Decatur, for a cruise to the southward, between Cape Henry and the coast of Florida.

In 1798, at the outbreak of the French War, our available navy comprised: the *Constitution*, 44; *United States*, 44; *Constellation*, 38; *Portsmouth*, 24; the 18-gun brigs *Norfolk* and *Pinckney*; the 14-gun brigs *Eagle* and *Pickering*; the 14-gun schooners *Scammel*, *Governor Jay*, and *Virginia;* the 12-gun schooners *Diligence* and *South Carolina;* the 10-gun sloop *General Greene*, and the purchased merchantmen *Ganges*, *George Washington*, and *Merrimac*, all of 24 guns; the

Baltimore, *Delaware*, and *Montezuma*, of 20 guns; and the *Herald* and *Richmond* of 18 guns. The total was 22 vessels, mounting 456 guns, with a complement of 3484 men.

Early in the year 1798, news reached the United States that Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, who had been sent by President Adams to succeed James Monroe as our Minister to France, had been notified by the Chief Secretary of Foreign Affairs that the French Directory could hold no communication with him, and our Government learned that Mr. Pinckney thereupon crossed the French border and had taken up his abode in Amsterdam.

Upon the receipt of this intelligence a great popular clamor arose, which was reflected in Congress by prolonged and acrimonious debate between the Democratic and Federal leaders of both houses. Before adjournment a large sum was voted for national defence, three frigates were ordered to be armed and manned, and the number of revenue cutters was increased.

Every packet that came from St. Bartholomew, St. Kitts, or Curaçoa brought news of American ships overhauled and plundered, of sailors beaten, and of cargoes seized and confiscated by the French. The names of more than three hundred and forty vessels captured by the French between July, 1796, and the summer of 1798, were known at the State Department. A French privateer sailed into Rebellion Roads and, in full view of the Battery at Charleston, burned an English vessel to the water's edge. Still the negotiations between our envoys and the French government dragged on ineffectually, until at last, on March 19, 1798, President Adams informed Congress that our mission had proved a failure.

UNITED STATES SHIP "CONSTELLATION"

Then the war fever, that had been temporarily held in abeyance, broke out in earnest and waged hotter and hotter. The young men associated in volunteer companies for defence, the merchants subscribed for ships-of-war, and the women worked banners. Newburyport promised a 20-gun ship in ninety days. At Boston $125,000 was subscribed within two weeks, and the keels of two frigates were at once laid. In New York, $30,000 was raised within one hour. At Portland, Portsmouth, Salem, Chatham, Norwich, Philadelphia, and Baltimore the building of vessels of war was speedily begun. At Harvard a patriotic ode, written by Joseph Story, was sung in the College Chapel, June 26th. One stanza was:

> Shall Gallia's clan our coast invade,
> With hellish outrage scourge the main,
> Insult our nation's neutral trade,
> And we not dare our rights maintain?
> Rise, united Harvard's Band!
> Rise, the bulwark of our land!

Harvard was evidently quite as patriotic in 1798 as in 1861, albeit Mr. Story's verse will scarcely bear comparison with Lowell's *Commemoration Ode*.

On July 6, 1798, Stephen Decatur, Sr., sailed from Baltimore in command of the sloop-of-war *Delaware*, 20, for a cruise in the West Indies. He was scarcely clear of the land when he was hailed by a merchantman, the *Alexander Hamilton*, that had been boarded and plundered the day before by a French privateer of 14 guns. The *Delaware* at once started in pursuit, and within a few hours sighted four schooners ahead. Not being sure which of these was the privateer, Decatur ran in his guns and, closing his ports, stood off as

though fearing capture, and, as he had anticipated, the privateer at once made sail in chase. The Frenchman gained on the *Delaware*, and was closing, when he discovered the *ruse* and endeavored to escape, but Decatur overhauled the schooner, which proved to be *La Croyable*, 14, with seventy men, and she struck and was carried into port, the first prize of the French War. She was refitted, taken into the navy as the *Retaliation*, and went to sea under command of Lieutenant William Bainbridge, and shortly afterward was recaptured by the French frigate *Insurgente*, being the only vessel of our little navy taken by the French during the war.

Early in August, 1798, the *Constellation* and *Baltimore* went to Havana and safely convoyed a fleet of sixty merchant vessels to the United States. Toward the close of the year our naval force in the West Indies was divided into two squadrons: one, under Commodore Barry, cruising to windward and running as far south as Tobago; the other, under the orders of Commodore Truxton, had its rendezvous at St. Kitts and cruised as far to leeward as Porto Rico. This squadron included: the *Constellation*, flagship; *Baltimore*, 20, Captain Phillips; *Richmond*, 18, Captain Barron; *Norfolk*, 18, Captain Williams; and *Virginia*, 14, Captain Bright. During the autumn the *Constellation* captured *La Diligente et l'Union*.

At noon on February 9, 1799, with the island of Nevis bearing W.S.W., fifteen miles distant, the wind at northeast, the *Constellation* sighted a ship to the southward, which proved to be the French frigate *Insurgente*, 36, Captain Barreant. Hoisting his colors, Commodore Truxton bore down and the French commander, after first setting American colors, showed the French ensign, and fired a gun to wind-

ward by way of challenge, keeping meanwhile under easy sail.

At 3.15 P.M., the French ship hailed, and as the *Constellation* ranged alongside, both ships opened fire, and a very spirited action ensued. The French fired high, evidently intending to cut up the *Constellation* aloft, and her sails and rigging consequently suffered severely. The foretopmast was badly wounded near the lower cap, and Midshipman David Porter, who was stationed in the foretop, finding that he could not make himself heard on the deck, cut the stoppers and lowered the yard, thus preventing the fall of the topmast.

Meanwhile the *Constellation's* fire was telling, and she soon forged ahead of the French ship, and, crossing her bow, poured in a terrific raking fire. Then, taking position on her starboard bow, Truxton held his position fully an hour, receiving and pouring in broadsides, when he drew out of the thick smoke of battle, wore round, and, hauling across the stern of the French frigate, was just about to rake her with his whole broadside, when, at 3.30 P.M., she struck her colors.

Mr. Rodgers, First Lieutenant of the *Constellation*, Midshipman David Porter, and eleven men were at once sent on board the prize to take possession and superintend the removal of the prisoners. After removing the dead and caring for the wounded, and transferring about half the prisoners, it came on to blow heavily, darkness set in, and the ships became separated. Mr. Rodgers now found himself in a very precarious position, with a disabled ship and one hundred and seventy-three able-bodied prisoners, who were already showing a disposition to rise on their thirteen captors.

quarters for over four hours, when the *Constellation's* mainmast went by the board, every shroud having been shot away. All the topmen went over the side with the mast, Mr. Jarvis, the gallant young midshipman in the top, refusing to leave his post, and all of these but one man were lost.

In the excitement consequent upon this disaster, the French ship disappeared in the darkness and escaped into the port of Curaçoa, while the *Constellation* was forced to make her way to Jamaica to refit.

COMPARATIVE LOSS

	Guns	Weight	Crew	Killed	Wounded	Total	Time
Constellation.	50	826	310	14	25	39	5 hours.
Vengeance...	52	1115	330	50	110	160	

On February 3, 1801, a treaty of peace with France was ratified by the Senate, the American squadron was at once recalled from the West Indies, and the vessels of war captured on both sides were restored by the terms of the treaty. This was a rather one-sided bargain, as we returned the *Vengeance* and *Berceau* beside eight privateers, while the French had taken no vessel of our navy except the *Retaliation*, which, as *Le Croyable*, was the first French vessel captured by one of our ships in the war, and consequently we had no vessels to receive. During the two and a half years of this war with France, our navy captured eighty-four of their armed vessels, mounting over five hundred guns.

The *Constellation*, under command of Captain Alexander Murray, was sent to the Mediterranean during the war with the Barbary Powers, in the squadron of Commodore R. V. Morris. She sailed from Philadelphia March 13, 1802, arriving at Leghorn in April.

Early in May the *Constellation* was sent to Tripoli

to aid the *Boston* in the blockade of that port. As Sweden was at war with Tripoli, a Swedish cruiser was also there on blockade duty, but she was withdrawn a few months later, peace having been made between the two countries.

One morning, not long after the arrival of the *Constellation*, the masthead lookout saw several small vessels to the westward, stealing alongshore. The Swedish frigate was offshore, so the *Constellation* got under way with a light breeze, and by noon the strangers were made out to be seventeen Tripolitan gunboats, which, as it was afterward learned, had gone out at night to convoy in an American prize that was expected from Tunis.

The wind freshening, the *Constellation* drew in with the land, and Captain Murray believed he would succeed in cutting them off. But the enemy divided their boats into two divisions, and one of them, by pulling dead to windward, escaped. The rear division of the boats, less fortunate, fell under the *Constellation's* fire. Captain Murray stood in to ten fathoms, keeping up a fire on the boats, and compelled them to bear up and pull toward the shore, firing as they retreated. There they ran into nooks behind the rocks, while a large body of cavalry appeared on the sand-hills prepared to cover their boats should the American frigate send in a party to cut them out, and the batteries also opened on the ship at long range.

Deeming it imprudent to send in his boats unsupported, Captain Murray wore and stood offshore. This affair was the opening of aggressive efforts against the port of Tripoli by the American forces. The gunboats were a good deal cut up. A few weeks later the *Constellation* suffered such damage in a severe gale of wind

that she was sent to a Spanish port to refit, and shortly after she sailed for home.

In July, 1804, the *Constellation*, under command of Captain H. F. Campbell, returned to the Mediterranean as one of Commodore Samuel Barron's squadron, and on September 10th Barron relieved Commodore Preble at Syracuse.

The *Constellation* took part in the closing operations of the war, and soon after the treaty of peace was signed in June, 1805, she returned to the United States, arriving at Washington, November 29th. She was then laid up in ordinary in the Eastern Branch, D. C., until the year 1812, when she was taken to the Washington Navy Yard and rebuilt, being given fourteen inches more beam.

In January, 1813, the *Constellation* sailed from Washington under command of Captain Charles Stewart, and dropped down to Hampton Roads, only to find such a strong blockading force of British vessels in the bay as to preclude the possibility of getting to sea. Stewart returned to Norfolk and prepared his ship against possible attacks from the enemy, keeping his crew constantly engaged in target practice. As a result of these precautions he successfully repelled every effort made by the British to destroy his ship.

On June 20th, while the *Constellation* was at anchor, near Craney Island, about five miles below the Norfolk Navy Yard, the British fleet, under the command of Admiral Warren, thirteen sail in all, with transports and a body of troops, dropped up to the mouth of James River. As the enemy was evidently making preparations for landing, Captain Stewart at once sent a detachment of one hundred marines and sailors on shore, under Lieutenants Neal, Shubrick, and Sanders, and

Lieutenant Breckenridge of the marines, to man a small battery on the northwest side of the island.

At dawn on the twenty-second the British were discovered landing around the point of Nansemond River, and at 8 A.M. the barges attempted to land in front of the island, out of reach of shot from the gunboats. The *Constellation* at once opened fire, which was so well directed that the largest British barge, the *Centipede*, and Admiral's Warren boat were both sunk, and about fifty men were killed and drowned. The fire from the *Constellation* and from the battery manned by her officers and men was so effective, that the enemy speedily abandoned their attempt and withdrew.

After the return of Bainbridge in the *Constitution* from the capture of the *Java*, Captain Stewart was transferred to the command of "Old Ironsides," and Captain Joseph Tarbell took command of the *Constellation*.

Less fortunate than the *Constitution*, although she had begun her career quite as successfully, the *Constellation* was thus shut in and condemned to remain in inglorious idleness during the stirring years of the war with Great Britain, while the *Constitution* was winning undying laurels against the enemy.

About the close of the war with Great Britain, the *Constellation*, under command of Captain Charles Gordon, was sent to the Mediterranean in a fine squadron, with the flag of Commodore Decatur in the *Guerrière*, 44. The other ships were the frigate *Macedonian*, 36; sloops-of-war *Epervier*, 18, and *Ontario*, 18; and the schooners *Flambeau*, 12, *Spark*, 12, *Spitfire*, 11, and *Torch*, 10 guns.

Decatur's special mission was to bring the Barbary Powers to terms, and compel them to respect the

conditions of their treaties with the United States. The Commodore sailed from New York on May 20, 1815, and reached Gibraltar on the 14th of June, after a passage of twenty-five days. The arrival of this fleet of American ships, under the command of Decatur, attracted general attention abroad, and many visitors came off to inspect the ships. "A British naval officer visiting the *Constellation*," says S. P. Waldo in his *Life of Decatur*, "asked the officer of the deck to give him the names of the different vessels. Pointing to the flagship, the Lieutenant said, 'That, sir, is the *Guerrière;* the frigate on her port bow is the *Macedonian;* that sloop-of-war is the *Epervier;* the next astern is the ———.' 'Oh, d——n the next!' said the officer as he turned away in chagrin at hearing the names of three ships captured from his own navy."

On June 17th, three days after his arrival at Gibraltar, Decatur, in the *Guerrière*, fell in with the Algerine Admiral Hammida and captured his frigate *Mazouda*, killing thirty of the enemy, the Admiral among the number. On June 19th, he captured an Algerine brig of twenty-two guns and sent her into Carthagena; and on the 30th of June the Dey of Algiers signed a new treaty with the United States. The *Constellation* was with Decatur's fleet at Algiers when this treaty was executed, and on July 25th she was at Tunis, where the Bey was forced to pay $46,000 as indemnity for violations of his treaty. In August the fleet appeared before Tripoli, where $25,000 was exacted from the Bashaw, and several Christian prisoners were liberated. After some slight repairs to his ships at Messina, Decatur returned home with his squadron in November, 1815, leaving the *Constellation*, however, in the Mediterranean, where she remained from 1815 to

1817, under command, in turn, of Captains Gordon and William M. Crane and Commodore John Shaw.

From 1819 to 1820 the *Constellation* was on special service in the West Indies and Brazil, under command of Commodore Charles Morris and Master-Commandant J. B. Nicholson, and from 1820 to 1822, under Captain C. G. Ridgely, in Commodore Charles Stewart's squadron in the Pacific. During the years 1825–27, the *Constellation* was the flagship of Commodores Lewis Warrington and Charles G. Ridgely in the West Indies; and in 1829 she was sent on special service to France and England, going afterward to the Mediterranean, under Captain A. S. Wadsworth, from whence she returned to Norfolk in November, 1831.

In April, 1832, under Captain George C. Read, she sailed for the Mediterranean for a two-years cruise; and, in 1835, the *Constellation*, under Master-Commandant M. P. Mix, became the flagship of Commodore A. J. Dallas's West India squadron, returning to Boston, October 24, 1838. December 10, 1840, she sailed from Boston, under Captain George W. Storer, for Rio de Janeiro, where she became the flagship of Commodore Lawrence L. Kearney's East India squadron, returning to Norfolk, May 1, 1844. In 1859, the *Constellation*, under the command of Captain Charles Wilkes and Captain John S. Nicholas, made a cruise on the coast of Africa as the flagship in the squadron of Commodore William Inman, whence she was recalled at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, arriving at Portsmouth, N. H., September 28th of that year.

The *Constellation* remained at the Portsmouth Navy Yard until March, 1862, when she was sent to the Mediterranean, under command of Commodore Henry K.

Thatcher. Her sailing orders from Secretary Gideon Welles read:

> The main object in sending the *Constellation* to the Mediterranean is the protection of our commerce from the piratical depredations of vessels fitted out by those in rebellion against the United States. The principal one of these vessels, the *Sumter*, which has so far eluded our cruisers, when last heard from was in the vicinity of Gibraltar. Your chief duty will be the pursuit of that vessel, should she remain in that quarter. At the same time, however, you will exercise vigilance in all cases.

How much that very energetic public functionary, Gideon Welles, had yet to learn of the proper conduct of naval warfare is shown in his sending the sailing-ship *Constellation* across the Atlantic Ocean in search of the steamer *Sumter*, commanded by a shrewd, daring, and resourceful naval officer like Raphael Semmes.

A month later we hear of the *Constellation* at Cadiz. United States Consul H. J. Sprague says, in a letter to Commander T. A. Craven:

> I have a letter from Captain Thatcher, of the *Constellation*, at Cadiz. After some caulking he intended to proceed up the Mediterranean, unless I had anything to suggest to induce him to alter his views. . . . I would be glad to hear from you what you think about the matter. It strikes me that the *Constellation*, like the *Ino*, *St. Louis*, etc., being sailing craft, had better be cruising out than in the Mediterranean."

Mr. Sprague was perfectly right; the introduction of steam had sounded the knell of the sailing-ships of all navies; and the grand old *Constitution* and her sister ship, the *Constellation*, were only valuable as worthy

memorials of a past day and generation. On October 17, 1862, the *Sumter* was at Gibraltar and the *Constellation* was at Messina; and the following June, Commodore Thatcher, as he had now become, owing to the rapid rate of promotion consequent upon the resignation of so many Southern officers, writes to the Navy Department that he hears of "a new Confederate steamer, the *Southerner*, being built in England for Commander T. Jefferson Page, late of the U. S. Navy"; and as he understands she is coming into the Mediterranean he is naturally uneasy, as "the *Constellation*, though an efficient vessel of her class, could not successfully pursue a steamer."

The Commodore does not hint at the possibility of the Confederate steamer successfully pursuing the *Constellation*, although the inference is in his letter, all the same.

About this time, Commander Preble, of the *St. Louis*, also hears of the *Southerner* and writes to the Department of the predicament his ship will be in if the Confederate steamer makes her appearance. He says: "The *St. Louis* can do little at catching a large and fast steamer like this rebel vessel, if disposed to shun her, or at engaging her successfully if proportionately armed, but," he adds pluckily, "I will do what I can to cripple, capture, or destroy her."

For the next two years the *Constellation* remained in the Mediterranean, the latter part of the time in command of Captain H. S. Stellwagen, who seems to have received marked attentions from the Crown Prince Humbert, who, later, became King of Italy. On Monday, May 31, 1864, she was ordered to return home and report to Rear-Admiral Farragut for duty in the West Gulf squadron, touching at the Canary Islands and the

island of St. Thomas on her way. On October 14th the *Constellation* touched at Santa Cruz, Teneriffe, and reported that the Confederate steamer *Florida* had been there two months before. On December 14th, Captain Stellwagen arrived in Havana and found several blockade-runners in port, and also the *Harriet Lane*, under the English flag, and then called the *Lavinia*. The *Harriet Lane* had been captured by the Confederates in Galveston Harbor the previous year, and, after some repairs, had run out through the blockade with a cargo of cotton.

The *Constellation* was soon after sent North, and from 1865 to 1867 was the receiving ship at Norfolk; and from 1867 to 1870, under command of Commander William Rockendorff, was receiving ship at Philadelphia. In 1871, under command of Captain W. N. Jeffers, she was practice and gunnery ship at Washington, and was then sent to the Naval Academy at Annapolis, where, until 1888, she was used as the practice ship for naval cadets, making many summer cruises during those years.

For several years past the *Constellation* has been the stationary receiving ship of the station at Newport, R. I., and is carefully preserved as a worthy memorial of the beginnings of our navy.

CHAPTER IX

THE "UNITED STATES"

THE first of the frigates built under the Act of 1796 to get into the water was the *United States*, launched at Philadelphia, July 10, 1797. She was a fine ship, 175 feet in length, with 43.6 beam, mounting thirty-two 24-pounders and twenty-two 42-pound carronades. She cost $299,336.

The *United States*, under command of Commodore John Barry, the senior officer of the navy, who had superintended her construction, sailed from Philadelphia in July, 1798, for a cruise off Cape Cod in company with the *Delaware*, Captain Stephen Decatur, Sr.

On his way up the coast, Captain Barry sighted a heavy frigate showing French colors, and he at once hoisted the French flag, and, signalling the *Delaware* to haul off, stood down for the supposed enemy. Both ships manœuvred for the weather-gage, and the *United States*, having secured it, hoisted the American colors, and was just about to open fire when the other ship showed the English flag and hailed, announcing that she was the British frigate *Thetis*, 50, thus preventing what would have been an unfortunate collision.

During that autumn and the following winter the *United States* was engaged in the arduous and unthankful duty of protecting and convoying American

merchantmen and in chastising and destroying the swarms of French and Spanish picaroons, really little better than pirates, that infested the West Indies, preying upon our commerce. She captured four French privateers: the schooners *L'Amour de la Patrie*, 6 guns and eighty men; *Le Jaloux*, 14, and seventy men; *Le Tartufe*, 8, and sixty men; and *Le Bonaparte*. *L'Amour de la Patrie* attempted to escape by making short tacks to windward, but a well-directed shot from one of the 24-pounders of the *United States* striking the privateer between wind and water, she soon began to fill and settle, and Midshipman Stephen Decatur was sent in a boat to the assistance of the French crew. In a great state of alarm they were gathered on deck ready to swamp the boat if she approached, and Decatur, recognizing the danger, called to them to put up the schooner's helm and run for the frigate. This was done, but the privateer went down before reaching the *United States*, and the crew were picked up by the boats from the American ship.

Finding himself hampered with over two hundred prisoners on board his ship, Barry put in to the roads of Basse Terre with a flag of truce flying, hoping to effect an exchange of the Frenchmen for an equal number of Americans imprisoned at Guadaloupe. But, regardless of the flag, the batteries opened on the *United States*, so, hauling down the flag, Commodore Barry returned the fire and sailed out of the harbor uninjured.

Barry returned home soon after this, arriving at Newport, September 12, 1799, and on November 3d the *United States* sailed on special service to France, carrying as passengers Messrs. Oliver Ellsworth and William R. Davie, who, with Patrick Henry, had been

appointed by President Adams as Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary to negotiate with the French government. This commission, on arriving in Paris, found Napoleon Bonaparte at the head of the new Republic, and they were soon enabled to conclude a satisfactory adjustment of all international disputes.

The *United States* came home early in 1800, and shortly after returned to the West Indies as Commodore Barry's flagship, remaining until after the ratification of peace with France, when she came to Washington in April, 1801, and was laid up in ordinary in the Eastern Branch, D. C., until 1809.

In May, 1810, Captain Stephen Decatur was ordered to the command of the *United States*, the ship in which, only eleven years before, he had been a midshipman, an instance of rapid promotion never equalled before or since in the navy of the United States. On May 21st he sailed from Norfolk in company with the *Hornet* for a cruise on the coast. Decatur returned to Norfolk, November 23, 1811, and early in the year 1812 he again sailed with the *Congress* and *Argus*, but, recalled by the news of the declaration of war with Great Britain, he returned to New York, where the *United States* was joined to Captain John Rodgers's squadron and sailed on a cruise, June 21st.

This was the cruise in which Captain Rodgers, in the unlucky *President*, failed to accomplish his object of intercepting the fleet of English West-Indiamen. After running over to the chops of the English Channel, the *United States* returned to Boston, August 31st.

On October 8, 1812, the *United States* sailed for a second cruise in the squadron of Commodore Rodgers. On October 12th, Captain Decatur fortunately separated from the fleet and stood to the eastward. On the

25th, in latitude 29° N., longitude 29° 30′ W., while close-hauled on the port tack, with the wind fresh S.S.E., a sail was sighted about twelve miles to windward. This vessel afterward proved to be the British frigate *Macedonian*, 38, Captain John S. Carden, a noted martinet, and an officer who prided himself on having his ship in the highest state of efficiency.

The *Macedonian*, having sighted the American ship, made all sail in chase and bore down with topmast and topgallant-studdingsails set until almost within range, when she hauled by the wind to keep the weather-gage. Decatur kept his luff and began the action with a broadside, which fell short; but the next time his long 24's reached home, while the fire of the *Macedonian* did little or no damage.

At 10.10 Captain Carden, determining to close, bore up and came down on the American ship with the wind on his port quarter. Captain Decatur, meanwhile, laid his maintopsail to the mast and kept up a terrific fire as the *Macedonian* approached, and she, hauling up, replied with her starboard battery, but the *United States* fired twice to the Englishman's once, dismounting the guns of her starboard battery and cutting her crew down with grape and canister like sheep.

At 10.45 a shot carried away the *Macedonian's* mizzenmast, and the men on it were lost. Captain Carden now called away his boarders, and, putting his helm hard aport, prepared to board, but a shot carried away the fore-brace, and the yard swung round, throwing the ship up in the wind and exposing her to a raking fire from the *United States*.

By eleven, the *Macedonian's* fore- and maintopmast and main-yard had been shot away all of her boats were smashed, two guns of the main battery and all but two

of the forecastle and quarter-deck guns were disabled, and she had received over one hundred shot in her hull, while the carnage among the crew was frightful. In short, the ship was a dismasted wreck, rolling her main-deck battery under water in the long swell of the Atlantic Ocean. Decatur, observing her disabled condition, hauled off to reeve new rigging and secure his masts, and at twelve o'clock the *United States* bore down under easy sail across the stern of the English frigate, prepared to renew the action, when her colors were hauled down and she surrendered.

Lieutenant John B. Nicholson, who was sent to receive the surrender of the *Macedonian*, found her decks littered with dead and the ship little better than a wreck. Captain Carden went back to the *United States* in her boat and tendered his sword to Decatur, who declined to receive it, saying, "Sir, I cannot receive the sword of a man who has so bravely defended his ship."

A few months before this meeting, the *United States* and the *Macedonian* had been together at Norfolk, and Captain Carden had dined with Decatur on board his ship. In conversation the English captain remarked, "Decatur, though your ships may be good enough and you are a clever set of fellows, what practice have you had in war? There is the rub!"

COMPARATIVE FORCE

	Tons	Guns	Weight Metal	Men	Loss	Time
United States.....	1576	54	787	478	12	1 hour, 30 minutes.
Macedonian.....	1325	49	555	301	104	

Decatur justly considered his prize of such importance that, although the damage to his own ship was not such as to render her return to port necessary, he

deemed it prudent to accompany her home. So, putting Lieutenant Allen in command of the *Macedonian*, jury-masts were rigged, and on December 4, 1812, the two frigates, having evaded the British cruisers, entered the port of New London, where they were received by the partiotic citizens with great demonstrations of joy. A ball was, of course, given to Decatur and his officers, and Decatur at once sent Lieutenant Hamilton on to Washington with the *Macedonian's* colors and the news of the capture.

On January 1, 1813, the *United States* and *Macedonian* arrived in New York, where the usual great public dinners and receptions were given to the victors. Congress voted Decatur a gold medal, with a silver medal to each of his officers, while swords were presented to Decatur and Lieutenants Allen and Nicholson.

The *United States* sailed on May 24th from New York, and while in Long Island Sound was struck by lightning, the bolt shattering the royalmast and bringing down Captain Decatur's pennant; then, passing down the conductor outside the hull, it was attracted by a gun into a main-deck port, thence down the wardroom-hatch the bolt skirted the magazine scuttle, entered the surgeon's room, put out his light, tore up his bed, and, descending between the side and the ceiling, passed out at the water's edge, tearing off a sheet of copper.

The following day the whole of Commodore Jones's squadron was driven in to New London by a powerful British fleet, and the *United States* and the *Macedonian* were kept shut up there in close blockade until the end of the war in 1815; the *Hornet* escaping, as has been told in a previous chapter.

On September 3, 1815, the *United States*, Captain John Shaw, sailed from Boston in the squadron of

COMMODORE STEPHEN DECATUR, U.S.N.

From an engraving of the painting by T. Sully

Commodore Bainbridge, the ships assembling at Gibraltar in October to meet Captain Decatur's squadron. The object of this powerful naval combination was to operate against the Dey of Algiers, who, taking advantage of the occupation of our naval force in the late war with England, had again sent his corsairs out to capture American merchant ships in the Mediterranean.

The Algerian navy consisted of five frigates, six sloops-of-war, and one schooner,—in all, twelve vessels, carrying 360 guns. These vessels were well equipped, and heavily manned with thoroughly trained crews, commanded by experienced officers who had seen active service against the French and Portuguese.

Against this force Decatur had ten vessels, mounting 210 guns, but he had followed the Algerian squadron off the coast of Portugal and then to Gibraltar where, with the *Guerrière*, he had captured the *Mashouda* after a sharp engagement, in which the Algerian Admiral, Rais Hammida, and thirty Algerians were killed and thirty-six wounded out of a crew of 436, while the *Guerrière's* loss was only three killed and eleven wounded. Decatur followed this success by appearing before Algiers and succeeded in making a favorable treaty with the Dey by which all American prisoners were given up without ransom and the relations between the two nations in the future were to be the same as those between all civilized nations.

But shortly afterward the Dey of Algiers endeavored to evade the terms he had agreed to and on April 8, 1815, the *United States* arrived off Algiers from Port Mahon, with the *Constellation*, *Java*, *Erie*, and *Ontario*, and taking station within the port prepared to attack the city and the Algerian fleet. As a result of this demonstration the treaty was formally

signed. The *United States* now became the flagship of the Mediterranean squadron, returning home to Norfolk, May 18, 1819, and going out of commission.

The *United States* was commissioned November 19, 1823, and sailed January 5, 1824, from Norfolk, as the flagship of Commodore Isaac Hull, to relieve Commodore Charles Stewart in the Pacific. On her way out the frigate touched at Rio de Janeiro and reached Valparaiso, March 7th. Commodore Hull found that Chilean independence had been acknowledged by Spain and hostilities had ceased, but the war was still in progress in Peru, Callao being held by the Spaniards and loosely blockaded by the Peruvian fleet. The Commodore, therefore, at once sailed for Callao, where he found the *Franklin*, 74, and relieved Commodore Stewart, who sailed for home.

The American fleet, which included the *Vincennes*, *Peacock*, and *Dolphin*, maintained a strict neutrality during the war, which dragged on for another year. Lieutenant John Percival, who was first lieutenant of the *United States* during this cruise, was put in command of the *Dolphin* at Callao and soon after sailed with her for a long cruise among the then little-known islands of the Pacific Archipelago.

After three years on the Pacific station the *United States* returned to New York April 23, 1827. On July 3, 1832, she sailed for New York under Capt. J. B. Nicholson to join Commodore Patterson's squadron in the Mediterranean, returning to New York December 11, 1834. From 1836 to 1838, under Capt. J. Wilkinson, the *United States* was again in the Mediterranean, and from 1839 to 1840 she was in the Home squadron under Captain Lawrence Kearney.

January 9, 1842, the old frigate sailed from Norfolk

under Captain James Armstrong as the flagship of Commodore T. Ap. Catesby Jones's Pacific squadron. On the night of September 6, 1842, while lying in Callao, the British frigate *Dublin*, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Thomas, appeared off the port, and, seeing the American fleet, at once put to sea. The suspicions of Commodore Jones were immediately aroused, and, having heard that war was about to be declared between the United States and Mexico, the Commodore suspected the *Dublin* intended to run up the coast and take possession of California, a country that England had long had her eye upon.

The *United States* was at once got under way, and in company with the *Cyane* Jones hastened to the northward. They reached Monterey on October 16th, and Jones immediately demanded the surrender of the place, hoisting the American flag over the town. But the next day, having satisfied himself that the United States and Mexico were still at peace, he made such amends as were possible for his hasty action. A protest was made by the Mexican government as a consequence of this incident, and Commodore Jones was relieved from the command of the squadron, and the *United States* was ordered home, arriving in Boston October 4, 1844.

In June, 1846, she went out to the coast of Africa under command of Captain J. Smoot as the flagship of Commodore George C. Read, returning to Norfolk, February 17, 1849.

In 1861 the *United States*, while at the Norfolk Navy Yard, out of commission, was destroyed with other vessels on April 20th, by order of Commodore Paulding, to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Confederates.

John Barry, who, as senior officer of the United States Navy, superintended the building of the frigate *United States* and was her first commander, was born in County Wexford, Ireland, in 1745. He came to America in 1760, at the age of fifteen, and, adopting the sea as a profession, went through all the grades from cabin-boy up to shipmaster, attaining a command soon after he was twenty-one. He was very successful and was becoming a man of substance in his adopted city, when, at the outbreak of the war with Great Britain, Barry was asked by the Continental Congress to superintend the building of the first fleet fitted out at Philadelphia.

Barry had lately returned from London in command of the *Black Prince*, a ship that was afterward purchased by Congress, under the advice of Paul Jones, and was renamed the *Alfred*.

Early in 1775 Barry was placed in command of the brig *Lexington*, sixteen guns, the first vessel ready for sea, and with her he made a very successful cruise on the coast. His first prize was the *Edward*, an armed tender of the British frigate *Liverpool*, which he captured off the Capes of Virginia, April 17, 1775, after a sharp fight that lasted an hour. The *Edward* was very much cut up and suffered a severe loss in killed and wounded, while the *Lexington* had but four killed and wounded. This was the first capture of a vessel of war made by a regularly commissioned American cruiser in battle.

In October, 1776, Captain Barry was placed seventh in the list of captains and given command of the *Effingham*, twenty-eight guns, one of the largest ships built at Philadelphia. While in this ship Barry took twenty-eight men in four boats, and, attacking the

British blockading fleet in the Delaware, captured a schooner of ten guns and thirty-two men, and four transports laden with provisions for the British army in Philadelphia. Two English cruisers approaching, he burned his prizes and escaped to the shore without the loss of a man.

The *Effingham* was shortly after burned to prevent her from falling into the hands of the enemy, and Barry served for a time in Washington's army in the Jerseys.

In September, 1778, Captain Barry was ordered to the command of the *Raleigh*, thirty-two guns, and on the twenty-fifth she sailed from Boston to convoy a brig and a sloop. That day the *Raleigh* was chased by two ships, and the convoy was ordered back to Boston, while Barry cleared his ship for action; but a heavy fog set in and for two days the British and American vessels dodged each other, until the twenty-seventh, when Barry found himself close to a twenty-eight gun showing the British ensign.

It was nearly dark as the British ship came within range, and a general engagement followed in which the *Raleigh* lost her foretopmast and mizzentopgallantmast, and the Englishman luffed up and endeavored to rake, but Barry also bore up, bringing the two ships side by side, and attempted to board the enemy.

By this time the other English ship hove in sight, and to save his vessel Barry wore round and ran the *Raleigh* ashore. Then, landing a portion of his crew, he prepared to destroy his ship, but the two English vessels followed him, keeping up a heavy fire until he surrendered to the frigate *Experiment*, 50, Captain Wallace, and the *Unicorn*, 28. Captain Barry escaped by landing on Wooden Ball Island, twenty miles from the mouth of the Penobscot.

Early in 1781 Barry was given command of the frigate *Alliance*, 32, and sailed in February from Boston for France, carrying Colonel Henry Laurens on a mission to the French Court. On the passage out he captured the privateer *Alert*, and on his way home from France he captured the *Mars*, 26 guns and 112 men; the *Minerva*, 10 guns and 55 men; the *Atalanta*, 16, and *Trepassy*, 14 guns. These last he captured together after a sharp fight in which he was severely wounded. In December, 1781, under orders from Congress, Barry fitted out the *Alliance* and carried Lafayette to France, where the American captain was most cordially received.

In 1783, while bringing home a large amount of specie from Havana in the *Alliance*, Barry had an engagement with the British sloop-of-war *Sybil*, 30. He fought her until she was ready to surrender, when, two English frigates coming up, the *Alliance* made off. In this fight the *Sybil* lost seventy-seven killed and wounded, against fourteen on board the *Alliance*. In 1794, Barry was named as senior officer of the United States Navy and was ordered to the command of the *United States*.

Commodore John Barry died in Philadelphia, Pa., September 13, 1803.

CHAPTER X

THE "ESSEX"

THE *Essex*, 32, a ship of 860 tons, the smallest frigate in our navy, was built in 1799 by subscriptions from the patriotic citizens of Salem at a cost of $139,362, and was presented to the government for the purpose of protecting American commerce and "to chastise French insolence and piracy."

The *Essex* sailed for the Indian Ocean in December, 1799, under command of Captain Edward Preble, and was the first United States naval vessel to double the Cape of Good Hope, as later, in 1813, she was the first to go around Cape Horn. From 1802 to 1805 the *Essex* took part in the operations against the Barbary Powers in the Mediterranean under Captains Samuel Barron, William Bainbridge, Stephen Decatur, Charles Stewart, George Cox, and A. Campbell. In 1810 she went to Europe, under Captain John Smith, and in 1811 she was in Commodore Rodgers's squadron on our coast.

On July 2, 1812, Captain David Porter sailed from New York in the *Essex* for a cruise to the southward in search of the British frigate *Thetis*, 36, reported to be bound for South America carrying a large amount of specie.

Failing to fall in with the *Thetis*, the *Essex* ran to

the northward, and on the night of July 10th a fleet of merchantmen was sighted under convoy. Porter ran in his guns, trimmed his yards carelessly, and, keeping his men out of sight, ran into the fleet. Approaching one of the sternmost ships he learned from her master, who mistook the *Essex* for a trading ship, that the fleet was transporting a British regiment from Barbadoes to Quebec under convoy of the frigate *Minerva*, 32, Captain Richard Hawkins.

Drawing ahead Porter spoke a second vessel, but her captain, suspecting the character of the stranger, was about to give the alarm when the ports of the *Essex* were thrown open, her guns were brought to bear, and Captain Porter sternly ordered him to keep silence and to follow his movements under penalty of being blown out of water.

The captain of the brig obeyed orders and Porter actually manœuvred his own vessel and his prize out of the fleet without exciting an alarm. When beyond hailing distance a prize crew was put on board the brig, which had 197 soldiers on board, and the *Essex* returned to the fleet in quest of another prize, but by this time day had broken and the true character of the *Essex* was discovered.

As the *Minerva* was in plain sight Porter cleared his ship for action, expecting to be attacked. But the Englishman, believing discretion the better part of valor, declined the contest and kept his course, covering the convoy from further loss and proceeding on to Quebec. Porter sent the prize brig home but kept the British soldiers on board the *Essex* as prisoners.

On August 13th, a sail was sighted which proved to be a man-of-war. Porter again disguised his ship as a merchantman, and the vessel, which proved to be the

British ship-sloop *Alert*, 16, mounting eighteen short 32's and two long 12's, ran down on the weather quarter of the *Essex*, gave three cheers, and opened fire. The *Essex* ran out her guns and responded with a broadside, reducing the *Alert* to a sinking condition in eight minutes, when she surrendered. This was the first capture in the War of 1812 of an English cruiser.

Lieutenant Finch was sent on board the prize and found her rigging and hull badly injured, seven feet of water in her hold, and three men wounded. After the crew of the *Alert* had received the first broadside from the *Essex* they deserted their guns and, going aft, requested Captain Langhorne to strike his colors.

After taking the crew out of the *Alert*, Porter had five hundred prisoners on board the *Essex*, or nearly double his own complement, and the closest vigilance was demanded. Farragut, who was a midshipman in the *Essex*, tells in his journal of an attempt by the prisoners to capture the ship, which he was enabled to frustrate. He feigned sleep when the leader of the conspirators, who had escaped from his irons, approached his hammock, and then, slipping out of bed, Farragut informed the Captain of the plot. Porter gave the alarm of "Fire!" and as the crew rushed to quarters they were armed and ordered to secure the prisoners. To rid himself of this dangerous element Porter now threw the *Alert's* guns overboard and, making her a cartel, sent the British prisoners under parole to Nova Scotia.

On the night of September 4th, the *Essex* was chased by the British frigate *Shannon*, 38, and another ship. Believing his two enemies had become separated, Porter made ready to fight the *Shannon*, but at daybreak the British ships were not in sight.

The *Essex* returned to the Delaware on September

7th, after a cruise of sixty days, in which she had captured nine prizes, recaptured five American vessels, and had taken over five hundred prisoners.

On October 28th, the *Essex* sailed from the Delaware with the intention of joining the *Constitution* and *Hornet* on a cruise in the Indian Ocean; an object that was not accomplished, however, by either of these vessels. Captain Bainbridge had appointed two places of rendezvous for his ships, Porto Praya and Fernando de Noronha, but the *Essex* failed to meet the *Constitution* at either point.

At 2 P.M., on the 11th of December, just after crossing the equator in longitude 30° W., a brig was sighted to windward and Porter displayed the British signals he had captured in the *Alert*, but as they were not noticed he crowded all sail in chase and by nine o'clock he came within gunshot and soon after hailed the brig to heave to. The chase, however, yawed and endeavored to run across the stern of the *Essex* to rake, but Porter came about and pouring in a volley of musketry the brig struck, having one man killed. The prize proved to be the British packet *Nocton*, ten guns, bound for Falmouth with fifty-five thousand dollars in specie on board, which was transferred to the *Essex*. The *Nocton* was sent home in charge of Midshipman William Finch, but was captured off Bermuda by the frigate *Belvidera*.

At Fernando de Noronha Porter received a letter left for him by Bainbridge with the governor, addressed, by previous agreement, to Sir James Yeo of the British 32-gun frigate *Southampton*. The letter read:

My dear Mediterranean friend, probably you may stop here. Don't attempt to water; it is attended with too

much difficulty. I learned before I left England that you were bound for the Brazil coast; if so, we may meet at Bahia or Rio de Janeiro. I should be happy to meet and converse on our old affairs of captivity. Recollect our secret in those times. Your friend of his Majesty's ship *Acasta*, Kerr.

Captains Porter and Bainbridge had been prisoners together in Tripoli, and Porter took the hint. Holding the letter near a candle the following lines, written in sympathetic ink, became visible:

I am bound off Bahia, thence off Cape Frio, where I intend to cruise until the 1st of January. Go off Cape Frio, to the northward of Riode Janeiro and keep a look out for me. Your friend.

Porter sailed at once for Cape Frio, arriving off that point December 25th, four days before the *Constitution* captured the *Java* off Bahia. After cruising for several days he captured the British schooner *Elizabeth* and, learning from her that she was one of a convoy of six vessels from Rio de Janeiro for Bahia, Porter stood to the southward, hoping to intercept them, and while off Bahia he learned that the *Constitution* and *Hornet* had been off that port, but he did not hear of their two victories. At St. Catherine Porter was falsely informed that the *Montague*, 74, had raised the blockade of the *Bonne Citoyenne*, and that the *Constitution* and *Hornet* had put to sea.

This condition of affairs leaving Porter at liberty to follow his own inclination, he decided upon the daring scheme of doubling the Horn and making a cruise in the Pacific, subsisting upon the enemy while he made an unexpected blow at British commerce in an ocean where they did not expect to find a foe.

On January 26th, the *Essex* sailed from the island of St. Catherine, making the Horn on February 14th. Here they encountered very heavy weather, one severe gale succeeding another until the ship was severely strained, while the gun-deck ports were stove in by the breaching seas, the quarter-boats washed from the davits, the head-rails swept away, and the hammock stanchions broken. The torrents of water rushing down the hatchway caused a temporary panic among the crew, and the boatswain, believing the ship was foundering, cried out: "We are sinking. The ship's broadside is stove in!" Farragut, in his journal, graphically describes the event and says: "This was the only instance in which I ever saw a regular good seaman paralyzed by fear of the perils of the sea." But at last the weather moderated, a favorable slant of wind obtained, and the good ship rounded the Horn and entered the Pacific Ocean.

Stopping at the island of Mocha for fresh supplies the crew hunted wild hogs and salted them down, and on March 15, 1813, Porter put in to Valparaiso, where he first learned that Chile had declared her independence of Spain. The *Essex* sailed on March 20th, and five days later, learning from an American whaler that the whalers *Walker* and *Barclay* had been captured off Coquimbo, he made sail for that port. On the evening of March 26th, while disguised as a merchantman, the *Essex* sighted a vessel showing Spanish colors, and believing her to be a picaroon Porter hoisted English colors, when the vessel ran down, fired a shot ahead of the *Essex*, and sent an armed boat to board her. Captain Porter at once ran his guns out, and, commanding the stranger to surrender, she struck her colors.

The prize proved to be the Peruvian cruiser *Nereyda*, fifteen guns, which had captured the American whalers, as her commander freely admitted, while believing the *Essex* to be a British frigate. Porter threw all the *Nereyda's* guns, small arms, ammunition, and spars overboard, and after having obtained the names of all the British whalers in the Pacific known to the Peruvian commander, he allowed him to go, with a warning against further depredations on American vessels.

Porter now busied himself in painting his ship in such a manner as to resemble a Spanish merchant vessel, and while so engaged a large ship was seen standing in toward Callao. She was captured after an hour's chase and proved to be the *Barclay*. Putting a prize crew on board he made for the Galapagos, arriving off Chatham on April 17th. On the 29th he captured the *Montezuma* with fourteen hundred barrels of sperm oil, and the same day, the wind having fallen, he took the whalers *Georgiana* and *Policy* with his boats. The greater part of the crews of the last two vessels were impressed Americans, who gladly entered the service in the *Essex*.

These three prizes, with their cargoes, were worth in England half a million dollars, and, as they were all armed, Porter transferred the guns and small arms from the *Policy* to the *Georgiana*, which was pierced for eighteen guns, and thus, giving her a battery of sixteen light guns, fitted her out as a cruiser. Lieutenant John Downes and forty-one men were then sent on board the *Georgiana*, the American flag was hoisted, and she fired a salute of seventeen guns, which the *Essex* returned with nine guns.

Porter now thoroughly overhauled the *Essex*, reeving new rigging from the supplies captured in his

various prizes. On the afternoon of the 28th of May while cruising near Charles Island, a sail was sighted and chased, but as night came on Porter ordered his three tenders to keep well apart to prevent the escape of the stranger. At daylight on the 29th the *Montezuma* signalled "A sail to the northward," and the *Essex* bore away in that direction although nothing could be seen from her masthead. After chasing all day, however, the *Essex* ran down and captured the British letter-of-marque *Atlantic*, eight 18-pounders.

While taking possession a sail was made from the masthead, and as the *Atlantic* was a very fast ship Porter put Midshipman McKnight and eleven men on board of her and sent his new prize off after the stranger, the *Essex* following. Night came on, but the chase was kept up, until the vessel was at last run down and proved to be the British letter-of-marque *Greenwich*, which had sailed from England in convoy of the *Java*.

The *Greenwich* had one hundred tons of fresh water on board, which was badly needed by the *Essex*, and also eight hundred large tortoises, which kept Porter's fleet in fresh provisions for a month. Abundant stores of cordage, canvas, paint, and ship stores were found in the cargo of the *Greenwich*, so that nothing was needed for refitting his little squadron which now included the *Essex*, 46 guns and 245 men; *Georgiana*, 16 guns and 42 men; *Greenwich*, 10 guns and 14 men; *Atlantic*, 6 guns and 12 men; *Montezuma*, 2 guns and 10 men; *Policy*, 10 men; and *Barclay*, 7 men. In all, seven ships with eighty guns and 340 men, in addition to eighty prisoners.

As he now had more ships and prisoners than he could well handle, Captain Porter made sail for the mainland and on June 19th anchored in the river

Tumbez. Lieutenant Downes in the *Georgiana* had been ordered to cruise offshore and a few days later he captured the *Catherine*, eight guns and twenty-nine men, and the *Rose*, eight guns and twenty-one men. Downes put twenty men and prize masters on board these vessels, leaving himself with only twenty men and boys to guard the fifty prisoners. The same day he chased and overhauled a privateer, the *Hector*, eleven guns and twenty-five men. Running alongside, Downes ordered her to strike, but, receiving no reply, he fired a shot into her quarter and a running fight ensued. After five broadsides the *Hector* surrendered, having lost her maintopmast and two men killed and six wounded.

After putting a prize crew on board the *Hector* Downes found himself with but ten men in the *Georgiana* to sail the ship and guard seventy-three prisoners. So taking a portion of the *Rose's* cargo out of her and throwing her guns overboard he made her a cartel, and, paroling the prisoners, he put them on board directing them to make for St. Helena, while the *Georgiana* with her two remaining prizes rejoined Captain Porter at Tumbez on June 24th.

Porter now promoted Lieutenant Downes to Master-Commandant and gave him command of the *Atlantic*, renamed the *Essex Junior*, with twenty guns and sixty men. The squadron sailed June 30th, and on the 4th of July the three largest vessels fired salutes of seventeen guns and, as Porter's journal says, "the day was passed in the utmost conviviality," which can be readily believed under the peculiarly happy conditions then existing in this little fleet so strangely brought together.

On July 9th Porter ordered Downes to convoy the

Hector, *Policy*, *Catherine*, *Montezuma*, and *Barclay* to Valparaiso. Young Farragut, then twelve years and four days old, was placed in command of the *Barclay*, but, in consideration of his tender years, the former English master of the vessel was sent in her for the possible benefit the young prize-master might find in his advice.

Farrugut tells the story of the queer division of authority in his journal as follows:

> I considered that my day of trial had arrived (for I was a little afraid of the old fellow, as every one else was). But the time had come for me at least to play the man; so I mustered up courage and informed the captain that I desired the maintopsail filled away in order that we might close up with the *Essex Junior*. He replied that he would shoot any man who dared to touch a rope without his orders, he would go his own course, and had no idea of trusting himself with "a blasted nutshell," and then he went below for his pistols. I called my right-hand man of the crew and told him of my situation; I also informed him that I wanted the maintopsail filled. He answered with a clear "Aye, aye, sir," in a manner which was not to be misunderstood, and my confidence was perfectly restored. From that moment I became master of the vessel, and immediately gave all necessary orders for making sail, notifying the captain not to come on deck with his pistols unless he wished to go overboard; for I really would have had very little trouble in having such an order obeyed.

It is needless to say that the young prize-master carried his prize safely in to Valparaiso.

After appointing a rendezvous for the *Essex Junior* in September, Captain Porter in the *Essex*, with the *Greenwich* and *Georgiana*, made for the Galapagos Islands. On July 13th, three sail were sighted, and

the American ships started in chase. The *Essex* overhauled and captured her ship, the *Charlton*, ten guns, and from her learned that the other vessels were the *Seringapatam*, fourteen guns and forty men, and the *New Zealander*, eight guns and twenty-three men.

Meanwhile, after several broadsides, the *Seringapatam* had struck to the *Greenwich*, but immediately afterward made sail in an attempt to escape and would probably have succeeded, as the *Greenwich* was a very slow sailer and night was coming on, had not the *Essex*, after capturing the *New Zealander*, joined in the chase and overhauled her. Porter stripped the *Charlton* of her armament, transferring her guns to the *Seringapatam*, and putting forty-eight paroled prisoners on board started the cartel for Rio de Janeiro. On the twenty-fifth, the *Georgiana*, with a full cargo of oil, was sent home, while the *Essex*, *Greenwich*, *Seringapatam*, and *New Zealander* made for Albemarle Islands. Three days later, Porter chased a strange vessel all day, following her in his boats when the wind died away, but, after a most exciting chase, the stranger escaped at night, greatly to the discomfiture of the Americans, who had become unaccustomed to losing their prey. August 4th, the fleet anchored off James's Island, and, after changing the appearance of his ships by his favorite device of repainting them, Porter put into Banks Bay with his squadron.

After a few days' rest the *Essex* again sailed on a cruise, this time alone. On the 15th of September, by keeping up the appearance of a whaler, with his royal-masts housed and ports closed, he was able to get within gunshot of a large British whaler, having a letter of marque, which he captured. Porter was highly delighted to find that this ship, the *Sir Andrew*

Hammond, twelve guns and thirty-six men, was the vessel that had escaped from him on the 28th of July after a long chase.

But the news of the successive captures of these British ships had reached home, as Porter learned upon his return to Banks Bay, where the *Essex Junior* joined him on her return from Valparaiso. Downes also brought the unwelcome news that several heavy English frigates were out in search of the *Essex*, and as Porter had captured all the British vessels now in those waters, he determined to winter at Nukahiva, in the Marquesas Islands, where he could overhaul and refit his ships in safety.

On the 23d of October, the *Essex*, *Essex Junior*, *Seringapatam*, *Sir Andrew Hammond*, and *Greenwich* anchored at Nukahiva. Here Porter landed, took formal possession of the island in the name of the Government of the United States, and gave it the name of Madison's Island. After erecting and arming a fort to command the bay, the *Essex* was stripped, her stores were landed, she was smoked out to free her of rats with which she was infested, and was then thoroughly overhauled and refitted. In November the *New Zealander* was sent to the United States with a full cargo of oil, but, unfortunately, both she and the *Georgiana* were recaptured by the British fleet on our coast.

During the winter, Porter found it necessary for his own protection to aid one of the native tribes in its warfare against another tribe that was hostile to the whites. The Americans also came near losing the *Essex Junior* through a well-arranged plot of the English prisoners on shore. Fortunately, however, the conspiracy was discovered and foiled. On the 10th of December, having completed fitting the *Essex*, Porter

determined to go to sea in search of nobler game than he had yet encountered.

Leaving the three prizes in the harbor in charge of Midshipmen Feltus and Clark, with a garrison of twenty men in the fort, under Lieutenant of Marines John M. Gamble, Porter sailed on December 12, 1813, in the *Essex*, in company with the *Essex Junior*, for the coast of South America. This was destined to be the close of one of the most remarkable cruises, in many respects, ever recorded in naval history.

After looking in at Concepcion, the two vessels reached Valparaiso, February 3d, where Porter learned that the British frigate *Phœbe*, 36, Captain James Hillyar, was on the coast looking for the *Essex*. On February 7th a reception and ball was given on board the *Essex* for the officers and citizens of Valparaiso. The next morning the *Essex Junior*, which had been cruising outside, signalled "Two enemy's ships in sight." At that time half the crew of the *Essex* were on shore on liberty, while the ship was still in disorder from the festivities of the previous night.

Porter at once fired a gun and hoisted a recall for all boats and men, but, before they were on board, the *Phœbe*, with the ship-sloop *Cherub*, 18, Captain Tucker, entered the harbor. Captain Hillyar, being informed by an English mate, who went off in a shore boat, that half of the crew of the *Essex* were on shore, ran in with the *Phœbe* on the wind and bore down for the *Essex*, both ships having their crews at quarters. As the *Phœbe* rounded the quarter of the *Essex*, she luffed up on the starboard bow of the American frigate, the two ships being within fifteen feet of each other.

At this moment, Captain Hillyar, who had met Porter in the Mediterranean several years before, stood on

an after-gun and said, "Captain Hillyar's compliments to Captain Porter and hopes he is well." Porter replied, "Very well, I thank you, but I hope you will not come too near for fear some accident might take place which should be disagreeable to you." Then, waving his trumpet, kedge anchors were at once run up at the yard-arms of the *Essex*, ready to grapple the *Phœbe*.

Captain Hillyar immediately braced his yards aback, saying that if he fell aboard he begged to assure Captain Porter it would be entirely accidental. "Well," replied Porter, "you have no business where you are. If you touch a ropeyarn of this ship I shall board instantly." Then, hailing Lieutenant Downes, he told him to be prepared to repel the enemy. The *Phœbe* slowly backed astern, her yards passing over those of the *Essex* without touching a rope, and she anchored half a mile astern. But in accomplishing this manœuvre the English ship was directly exposed to a raking fire from the broadside of the *Essex*, while the *Essex Junior* could have raked her under the stern.

Farragut, in his journal, shows how readily the action might have been brought on at that time. He says:

> When the *Phœbe* was close alongside and all hands were at quarters, the men with slow matches ready to discharge the guns, the boarders cutlass in hand standing by to board in the smoke, as was our custom, an intoxicated youth saw, or imagined he saw, through the port, some one in the *Phœbe* grinning at him. "My fine fellow, I'll stop your making faces," he exclaimed, and was just about to fire his gun when Lieutenant McKnight saw the movement, and with a blow sprawled him on the deck. Had that gun been fired, I am convinced the *Phœbe* would have been ours.

A day or two afterward Hillyar met Porter on shore and thanked him for his forbearance, assuring him that he need be under no apprehension of his breaking the blockade. But there is every reason to suppose that he had expected to find the *Essex* unprepared and in a condition to be carried by boarding.

The British ships now began a close blockade of the port, and on the 27th of February, the *Phœbe*, being hove to close off the entrance, with the *Cherub* two miles to leeward, the *Phœbe* fired her weather gun, hoisting a flag bearing the motto, "God and country, British sailors' best rights: traitors offend both." This Porter interpreted as a challenge, so, hoisting a flag in the mizzen with the inscription, "God, our country, and liberty: tyrants offend them," he took the crew of the *Essex Junior* on board and went out to attack the British frigate. Whereupon the *Phœbe* set her studding-sails and ran down to her consort.

For six weeks the two British ships stood guard over the *Essex*, then, learning that several other British frigates were expected, and having little confidence in their respecting the neutrality of the port, Porter determined to put to sea. On the 28th of March the *Essex* parted her port cable in a heavy southerly gale and dragged her starboard anchor to sea. Finding the blockaders were close in to the western side of the bay, Captain Porter took in his topgallantsails, set over single-reefed topsails, and braced up to pass to windward, but just as the *Essex* was rounding the Point of Angels a heavy squall struck her, and, before the top-sail-yard could be got down, the maintopmast went over the side, carrying the men who were furling the topgallantsail overboard, where they were drowned.

Porter wore round and endeavored to return to his anchorage, but the wind shifted and he was unable to do so. He then ran into a small bay and anchored about three quarters of a mile to leeward of a one-gun battery on the east side of the harbor and within pistol-shot of the shore.

The *Phœbe* and *Cherub* now bore down upon the *Essex* covered with ensigns, union jacks, and motto flags; and as soon as Hillyar saw that Porter was disabled it became evident that he did not intend to keep his word. The *Essex* prepared for action, though there could be no chance whatever of success. Her flags were flying from every mast, and everything was made ready as far as possible, but the attack was made before springs could be got on her cables. She was anchored so near the shore as to preclude the possibility of Captain Hillyar's passing ahead of her; so his two ships came cautiously down, the *Cherub* taking her position on the starboard bow of the *Essex*, and the *Phœbe* under her stern. The attack began at 4 P.M. Some of the bow-guns of the American frigate bore upon the *Cherub*, and, as soon as she found this out, the sloop ran down and stationed herself near the *Phœbe*. The latter had opened with her broadside of long 18's from a position in which not one of Porter's guns could reach her. Three times springs were got on the cables of the *Essex* in order to bring her round till her broadside bore; but in each instance they were shot away as soon as they were hauled taut. Three long 12's were got out of the stern-ports, and with these an animated fire was kept up on the two British ships, the aim being especially to cripple their rigging. A good many of Porter's crew were killed during the first five minutes, before he could bring any guns to bear; but afterward

COMMODORE DAVID PORTER, U.S.N.

From an engraving of the painting by J. Wood

he did not suffer much, and at 4.20, after a quarter of an hour's fight between the three long 12's of the *Essex* and the whole thirty-six broadside guns of the *Phœbe* and *Cherub*, the latter were actually driven off. They wore and again began with their long guns; but, these producing no visible effect, both of the British ships hauled out of the fight at 4.30 P.M.

"Having lost the use of the mainsail, jib, and main-staysail, appearances looked a little inauspicious," writes Captain Hillyar. But the damages were soon repaired, and his two ships stood back again for the crippled foe. Both stationed themselves on her port quarter, the *Phœbe* at anchor, with a spring, firing her broadside, while the *Cherub* kept under way, using her long bow-chasers. Their fire was very destructive, for they were out of reach of the *Essex's* carronades, and not one of her long guns could be brought to bear on them. Porter now cut his cable at 5.20, and tried to close with his antagonists. After many ineffectual efforts sail was made. The flying-jib halliards was the only serviceable rope uncut. That sail was hoisted and the fore-topsail and foresail let fall, though the want of sheets and tacks rendered them almost useless. Still, the *Essex* drove down on her assailants, and for the first time got near enough to use her carronades. For a minute or two the firing was tremendous, but after the first broadside the *Cherub* hauled out of the fight in great haste, and during the remainder of the action confined herself to using her bow-guns from a distance. Immediately afterward, the *Phœbe* also edged off, and by her superiority of sailing, her foe being now almost helpless, was enabled to choose her own distance, and again opened from her long 18's, out of range of Porter's carronades. The carnage on board the *Essex* had

now made her decks look like shambles. One gun was manned three times, fifteen men being slain at it: its captain alone escaped without a wound. There were but one or two instances of flinching; the wounded, many of whom were killed by flying splinters, while under the hands of the doctors, cheered on their comrades, and themselves worked at the guns like fiends as long at they could stand. At one of the bow-guns was stationed a young Scotchman, named Blissly, who had one leg shot off close by the groin. Using his handkerchief as a tourniquet, he said, turning to his American shipmates, "I left my own country and adopted the United States to fight for her. I hope I have this day proved myself worthy of the country of my adoption. I am no longer of any use to you or to her, so good-bye!" With these words he leaned on the sill of the port and threw himself overboard. Among the very few men that flinched was one named William Roach; Porter sent one of his midshipmen to shoot him, but he was not to be found. He was discovered by a man named William Call, whose leg had been shot off and was hanging by the skin, and who dragged the shattered stump all round the bag-house, pistol in hand, trying to get a shot at him. Lieutenant J. G. Cowell had his leg shot off above the knee, and his life might have been saved had it been amputated at once; but the surgeons already had rows of wounded men waiting for them, and when it was proposed to him that he should be attended to out of order, he replied: "No, doctor, none of that; fair play's a jewel. One man's life is as dear as another's; I would not cheat any poor fellow out of his turn." So he stayed at his post and died from loss of blood.

Finding it hopeless to try to close, the *Essex* stood

for the land, Porter intending to run his ship ashore and burn her. But when she had drifted close to the bluffs the wind suddenly shifted, took her flat aback and paid her head offshore, exposing her to a raking fire. At this moment Lieutenant Downes, commanding the *Essex Junior*, pulled out of the harbor in a boat, through all the fire, to see if he could do anything. Three of the men with him, including an old boatswain's mate, named Kingsbury, had come out expressly "to share the fate of their old ship"; so they remained aboard the *Essex*, and, in their places, Lieutenant Downes took some of the wounded ashore, while the *Cherub* kept up a tremendous fire upon him. The shift of the wind gave Porter a faint hope of closing; and once more the riddled hulk of the little American frigate was headed for her foes. But Hillyar put his helm up to avoid close quarters; the battle was his already, and the cool old captain was too good an officer to leave anything to chance. Seeing he could not close, Porter had a hawser bent on the sheet-anchor and let go. This brought the ship's head round, keeping her stationary; and from such of her guns as were not dismounted and had men enough left to man them, a broadside was fired at the *Phœbe*. The wind was now very light, and the *Phœbe*, whose main- and mizzenmasts and main-yard were rather seriously wounded, and who had suffered a great loss of canvas and cordage aloft, beside receiving a number of shot between wind and water, and was thus a good deal crippled, began to drift slowly to leeward. It was hoped that she would drift out of gunshot, but this last chance was lost by the parting of the hawser, which left the *Essex* again at the mercy of the British vessels. Their fire was deliberate and destructive, and

could only be occasionally replied to by a shot from one of the long 12's of the *Essex*.

The ship now caught fire, and the flames came bursting up the hatchway, and a quantity of powder exploded below. Many of the crew were knocked overboard by shot and drowned; others leaped into the water, thinking the ship was about to blow up, and tried to swim to the land. Some succeeded; among them was one man who had sixteen or eighteen pieces of iron in his leg, scales from the muzzle of his gun. The frigate had been shattered to pieces above the water-line, although, from the smoothness of the sea, she was not harmed enough below it to reduce her to a sinking condition. The carpenter reported that he alone of his crew was fit for duty; the others were dead or disabled. Lieutenant Wilmer was knocked overboard by a splinter and drowned; his little negro boy, "Ruff," came up on deck, and, hearing of the disaster, deliberately leaped into the sea and shared his master's fate. Lieutenant Odenheimer was also knocked overboard, but afterward regained the ship. A shot, glancing upward, killed four of the men who were standing by a gun, striking the last one in the head and scattering his brains over his comrades. The only commissioned officer left on duty was Lieutenant Decatur McKnight. The sailing-master, Barnwell, although terribly wounded, remained at his post till he fainted from loss of blood.

Of the 255 men aboard the *Essex* when the battle began, 58 had been killed, 66 wounded, and 31 drowned ("missing"), while 24 had succeeded in reaching shore. But 76 men were left unwounded, and many of these had been bruised or otherwise injured. Porter himself was knocked down by the windage of a passing

shot. While the young midshipman, Farragut, was on the wardroom ladder, going below for gun-primers, the captain of the gun directly opposite the hatchway was struck full in the face by an 18-pound shot and tumbled back on him. They fell down the hatch together, Farragut being stunned for some minutes. Later, while standing by the man at the wheel, an old quartermaster named Francis Bland, a shot coming over the foreyard took off the quartermaster's right leg, carrying away at the same time one of Farragut's coat-tails. The old fellow was helped below, but he died for lack of a tourniquet before he could be attended to.

Nothing now remained to be done, and at 6.20 the *Essex* surrendered and was taken possession of. The *Phœbe* had lost 4 men killed, including her first lieutenant, William Ingram, and 7 wounded; the *Cherub*, 1 killed, and 3, including Captain Tucker, wounded. Total, 5 killed and 10 wounded. The difference in loss was natural, as, owing to their having long guns and the choice of position, the British had been able to fire ten shots to the American's one.

This spectacular engagement had been witnessed by thousands of spectators who crowded the shore. The ships were so near the land that at one time several of the *Phœbe's* shot struck the beach. During the action, Mr. Poinsett, the American consul, made formal protest to the Governor against this breach of neutrality and demanded the protection of the batteries for the *Essex*. But to this reasonable request he received an evasive reply, being informed by the Governor that if the American ship should succeed in reaching the regular anchorage he would send an officer to Captain Hillyar, requesting him to cease his fire, but he discreetly declined resorting to force under any circumstances.

Indignant at this discourteous treatment, Mr. Poinsett withdrew from the country at the first opportunity.

Captain Porter now entered into an arrangement with Captain Hillyar, under the provisions of which, the *Essex Junior* was converted into a cartel, and a passport was given by means of which all the survivors of the *Essex* came home. From this arrangement, however, Acting Lieutenant McKnight, Mr. Adams, the chaplain; and Mr. Lyman, a master's mate, were exempted, these three gentlemen and eleven seamen being exchanged on the spot for a part of the crew of the *Sir Andrew Hammond*, who were then prisoners in the *Essex Junior*. Mr. McKnight and Mr. Lyman went round to Rio de Janeiro in the *Phœbe* in order to give some testimony in behalf of the captors.

The *Essex Junior* left Valparaiso shortly after this arrangement, encountering no difficulty in doubling the Horn. She was brought to, off New York, by the *Saturn*, razee, Captain Nash. This officer at first questioned the authority of Captain Hillyar to grant the passport under which the *Essex Junior* was sailing, and he directed that ship to lie by him during the night. After some communications the next morning, when thirty miles from the beach, Captain Porter put off in a whale-boat, and, though chased, by pulling vigorously for the land he got ashore on Long Island, escaping in a fog. It does not appear, however, to have been the serious intention of Captain Nash to detain the *Essex Junior*. He probably suspected some artifice, as he permitted the ship to proceed, after again examining her papers.

Thus terminated this enterprising and singular cruise, its end proving as disastrous as its commencement had been fortunate. The officers and men left

at Nukahiva with the three prizes, the *Greenwich*, the *Sir Andrew Hammond*, and the *Seringapatam*, were under the orders of Lieutenant Gamble of the marines. The *Essex* had no sooner disappeared than the savages began to pilfer and to betray a turbulent disposition, and Mr. Gamble was compelled to land a party to bring the natives to terms by a show of force. Fortunately, this object was effected without firing a musket. In February, one of the small party left was drowned, reducing their number to twenty-two, the officers included. Not long after this event four of the men deserted in a whale-boat, carrying off with them several small articles of value. But eighteen now remained.

On the 12th of April, Mr. Gamble began to rig the *Seringapatam* and the *Sir Andrew Hammond*, with the intention of quitting the islands, the long absence of the *Essex* inducing him to despair of her return. Some symptoms of a mutiny now appeared, and Lieutenant Gamble had all the arms and ammunition brought on board the *Greenwich*, in which vessel he lived; but having occasion to go on board the *Seringapatam* on the 7th of May, a party of six men rose and took the ship from him. During the time Mr. Gamble was in the hands of these men, he was badly wounded in the foot by a pistol-ball, and the mutineers succeeded in carrying off the *Seringapatam*, sending Mr. Gamble and the people with him on board another vessel.

Every exertion was made to get to sea with the *Sir Andrew Hammond*, but on the ninth the natives made an attack, and Mr. Feltus and three men were killed and one other was severely wounded. The situation of those that remained now became exceedingly critical, the whole party consisting of only eight individ-

uals, of whom two were badly wounded, one was crippled, and another was just recovering from a serious attack of the scurvy. In fact, there were but four men on board the *Sir Andrew Hammond* fit for duty. The jib and spanker were bent as speedily as possible, the moorings were cut, and, with that short sail, the ship passed slowly out to sea under cover of the night. When safe in the offing but six cartridges were found, the *Seringapatam* having carried off most of the ammunition in kegs.

To add to the difficulties of his situation, Mr. Gamble had no chart. He succeeded in reaching the Sandwich Islands, however, in seventeen days, where he was captured by the *Cherub*, and then first learned the fate of the *Essex*. The Americans continued seven months in the English ship, until they were landed at Rio de Janeiro, from which port Mr. Gamble got to New York late in August, 1815.

The *Essex* was refitted by her captors, sent home, and taken into the British navy, where she remained until 1837, when she was sold out of the service.

The second *Essex* in our naval service was a Mississippi river steamer, purchased by the United States Government in July, 1861, and converted by Mr. James Eads into a casemated ironclad, after the plan of the Confederate steamer *Merrimac*. From her hull was built, slanting inward at an angle of about thirty-five degrees, a thick timber casemate. This was covered with iron plating of from two and a half to three inches in thickness. The casemate enclosed the battery, the paddle-wheel, and the upper part of the engines and boilers. The armament of the *Essex* was one 10-inch, three 9-inch, one 32-pounder, and two rifled 50-pounders. She was, by happy chance, commanded by

Commander William D. Porter, son of Captain David Porter of the old *Essex*, and a brother of Captain David D. Porter, late Admiral of the Navy. Her crew was made up mainly of landsmen, soldiers, and river-boatmen, while her officers were former mates and pilots of river steamers taken into the service as volunteer officers. Neither officers nor crew had ever seen service on board of a vessel of war, and they were all totally ignorant of the use of great guns, with the exception of a few old sailors sent out to the Mississippi flotilla from the seaboard.

To complicate matters still further the Western flotilla was at first under the orders of the War Department, and not until July, 1862, was it transferred to the Navy Department. This anomalous condition necessarily led to a certain conflict of authority, for while the nine gunboats of the river squadron were under the general command of Captain Andrew Hull Foote, who had under him, in command of the different vessels, a number of regular naval officers, the four "rams" in the fleet were commanded by Colonel Charles Ellet and were manned by soldiers, whose idea of naval discipline was singularly lax.

The first active service of the *Essex* was on January 11, 1862, when Commander Porter was notified at Cairo that seven Confederate steamers with a floating battery in tow were moving up the river from Columbus. Signalling the *De Kalb*, Porter at once steamed down the river. There was a heavy fog, which did not lift until ten o'clock, when a large vessel, in company with two steamers, was seen ahead. As the *Essex* and *De Kalb* headed for them, the enemy opened fire at long range, their shells exploding near the *Essex*, which did not reply, but moved on down the stream until getting

into range, when both the Federal gunboats opened fire, and for twenty minutes a spirited engagement was kept up. At last the enemy retired, Porter chasing them under cover of the Confederate batteries above Columbus.

On February 2d, Captain Foote took his squadron, including the *Cincinnati*, *Essex*, *Carondelet*, *De Kalb*, *Conostaga*, *Lexington*, and *Tyler* from Cairo down to the mouth of the Tennessee River, and on the fourth of the month they anchored six miles below Fort Henry, where the troops were landed. On February 5th, Gen. U. S. Grant and staff boarded the *Essex* and ran close to the Confederate forts to reconnoitre. While thus engaged, a shot from the fort passed through the officers' quarters into the steerage. Upon this the *Essex* drew out of range and returned to her anchorage.

The following morning Flag-Officer Foote made signal for the fleet to get under way and clear for action; and at 11 A.M. the boats steamed up the river, the four ironclads leading, with the *Carondelet* and *De Kalb* lashed together on the left wing, and the *Cincinnati* and *Essex* on the right. The three wooden gunboats followed, a mile astern.

On rounding a bend in the stream, at 11.30, Fort Henry came in view; and at 12.30 the *Cincinnati* fired the first shot at seventeen hundred yards, which was at once answered from the fort. The fleet pushed up to about four hundred and fifty yards, where the action became general, and, as the ships came nearer, the walls of the fort gave way before the tremendous fire from the gunboats, kept head on to the enemy.

At 12.50 a shot passed through the armor of the *Essex*, killing Acting Master's Mate S. B. Brittan, Jr., and penetrating the middle boiler. The forward gun-

room was at once filled with steam, which created a panic. Some rushed aft, others sprang through the ports into the river, and Captain Porter escaped through a port with difficulty, badly wounded. He was saved from drowning by one of his crew. By this calamity twenty-eight men were scalded, many of them dying. James Coffey, shellman of No. 3 gun, was found on his knees in the act of taking a shell from its box. The scalding steam had struck him full in the face, killing him instantly. Both pilots were found dead in the pilot-house, one of them with his left hand holding the wheel and his right hand grasping the bell-rope.

The *Essex*, thus crippled, drifted out of action, but the fleet maintained the attack until, at 1.40, the fort surrendered and was occupied by a detachment of seamen under Commander Walke of the *Carondelet*. As the news of the surrender reached the *Essex*, Jasper T. Breas, a seaman who was badly scalded, sprang up and exclaimed, "Surrender! I must see that with my own eyes before I die," and, climbing up to the spar-deck, he shouted, "Glory to God!" and, sinking back exhausted, died that night. The total loss of the *Essex* in this engagement was thirty-two killed, wounded, or missing (drowned).

As it became necessary to send the *Essex* up to Cairo for repairs to her boiler, she did not participate in the attack upon Fort Donelson nor in Captain Davis's superb victory over the Confederate fleet before Memphis. But on the 22d of July, 1862, at early dawn, Porter, with the *Essex* and the ram *Queen of the West*, ran the formidable batteries of Vicksburg with the purpose of destroying the Confederate ironclad ram *Arkansas*, that had lately escaped from the Yazoo River and

was then lying at the levee at Vicksburg, directly under the guns of a water battery.

As the *Essex* approached the *Arkansas* the ram's head was swung out into the stream, thus presenting a sharp blade to the blow from the square bow of the Union ironclad. As such a collision would have sunk his ship beyond doubt, Porter sheered to starboard, at the same time firing three solid 9-inch shots at the *Arkansas* at a distance of fifty yards. One of these entered the casemate, and split open the breech of a gun killing eight men and wounding six. Another shot struck the casemate near the forward port, cut off the ends of the sheathing iron and drove the pieces diagonally across the deck. Then rubbing along the side of the ram, the *Essex* grounded astern of the *Arkansas*, where she hung for ten minutes under a heavy fire before she backed off and swung down-river. The ram *Queen of the West* struck the *Arkansas* twice, but did not succeed in sinking her, and, as the *Queen*, exposed to a tremendous fire, was struck twenty-five times, it is well-nigh miraculous that she managed to escape up-stream and rejoin the fleet.

The present writer was an officer attached to the U. S. S. *Richmond* at that time, our ship having run the Vicksburg batteries, with Farragut's fleet, a few nights before. We witnessed this exploit of the *Essex* with deep interest, the more so as we were not expecting it. I was one of those who went on board the *Essex* within an hour after she had anchored near us, and heard the story of the affair from Captain Porter, who, as I remember, was attired that morning in a red shirt and duck trousers, with an old straw hat, and looked much more like a melodramatic pirate than the very gallant naval officer he really was. Porter was

very much chagrined at not having succeeded in destroying the *Arkansas*, which was a perpetual menace to our fleet, and he swore, with anything but gentle oaths, that he "would have her yet," and, as fate decreed, he was as good as his word.

On August 3d, the *Arkansas*, with two gunboats, left Vicksburg to co-operate with General Breckinridge, who had been sent with six thousand men by General Van Dorn to recover Baton Rouge, then held by General Williams with four thousand men, of whom nearly one quarter were sick. The *Essex* and two other smaller gunboats were assisting in the defence of Baton Rouge.

At one o'clock in the morning of the 5th of August, Breckinridge made a sudden attack upon the town, which was repulsed by the Union forces with severe loss on both sides. The *Arkansas* was delayed by her machinery breaking down, but when she appeared she was at once attacked by the *Essex*. In manœuvring, the *Arkansas* ran ashore, when her commander, Lieut. H. K. Stevens, feeling that the day was lost, set his ship on fire and escaped to the shore with his crew. Porter ran up as near to her as he could and fired a shell into the ram, which exploded in her magazine and she blew up.

In March, 1864, the *Essex*, Commander Robert Townsend, took part, as one of Rear-Admiral David D. Porter's fleet, in General Banks's unfortunate Red River expedition, in which the flotilla was only saved from capture or total destruction by the happy thought of Colonel Joseph Bailey, who constructed a dam across the stream by which the vessels passed over the rapids and were saved.

From this time until the close of the war the *Essex*

had no further active service beyond patrol duty; and in August, 1865, she was sold, with other vessels of the Western flotilla. Her brief career, however, had not been unworthy of her distinguished predecessor on the navy list.

The third *Essex* is an auxiliary steam sloop-of-war of 1375 tons, with an armament of eight 4-inch guns and two 6- and two 1-pounders in her secondary battery. She was built at Boston in 1874–76, was commissioned October 1, 1876, by Commander Winfield Scott Schley, and was attached to the North Atlantic squadron in 1876–78. In 1882 she was in the Pacific squadron, under Commander A. H. McCormick; and, in 1884, on the Asiatic station. She returned to New York in 1885 and went out of commission. In 1887–88, the *Essex* was in command of Commander Theodore F. Jewell.

The *Essex* has been used as a training-ship for naval apprentices for several years.

CHAPTER XI

THE "LAWRENCE"

EARLY in September, 1812, Captain Isaac Chauncey, who had already shown remarkable executive ability in organizing the navy yard at Brooklyn, was ordered to proceed to Sackett's Harbor, N. Y., for the command of all the northern lakes, except Champlain. The object the Government had in view was to build and equip a fleet to operate against the British, who already had armed vessels on the lakes and were threatening our northern frontier. Chauncey at once despatched a force of forty carpenters from New York, and on September 18th one hundred seamen and officers left that city, with guns, ammunition, and stores for Sackett's Harbor.

After reaching his post, Chauncey purchased a number of small merchant craft, of from thirty to one hundred tons, which he armed, manned, and commissioned. The keel of a twenty-four-gun ship had been laid down in September, before he arrived, and various other ships were soon under way, including one pierced for one hundred guns and several others for forty-four and thirty-two guns.

Oliver Hazard Perry was born in Kingston, R. I., August 23, 1785. His father was a very gallant seaman, who had served with distinction in the Revolu-

tion as a privateersman, and in 1798 was appointed to the command of the United States cruiser *General Greene*, 28. In 1799, at the age of fourteen, young Oliver received a midshipman's warrant and made several cruises in his father's ship in the West Indies, and was in her when she participated in the reduction of Jacmel under Commodore Talbot. Subsequently he served under Preble in the Tripolitan War, and as acting lieutenant commanded the *Nautilus* in 1804, and served as commander of a fleet of seventeen gunboats off Newport Harbor during the embargo of 1810. In 1811, while Master in command of the schooner *Revenge*, he was wrecked on the rocks off Watch Hill, R. I. At the outbreak of the war with Great Britain, Perry was appointed Master-Commandant and resumed the command of the gunboats off Newport. Later, failing to obtain the command of either the *Hornet* or the *Argus*, he applied to be transferred to Sackett's Harbor, under Commodore Chauncey.

On February 17, 1813, Perry was ordered to take such officers and men from his gunboat flotilla as were suitable and report to Captain Chauncey. With the promptness that was so marked a characteristic of this young officer, within four days after receiving these orders he had selected and despatched, in three detachments, one hundred and fifty men under Masters Thomas C. Almy, Stephen Champlin, and William Vigneron Taylor, for Lake Ontario.

In these modern days, when detachments of soldiers and sailors are sent flying across the continent in luxurious trains of steam-cars, it is difficult to realize what it meant for that little body of sailors to force their way in winter through the untracked wilderness that lay between the shores of Long Island Sound and Lake

Ontario. Their progress was slow and weary, and it was a full month before Perry and his little band arrived at their destination, after a journey on foot, in sleighs, and at times in canoes down Oswego River to its mouth, where they took boats for Sackett's Harbor.

On March 16th, Perry left Sackett's Harbor for Presque Isle, now called Erie, where he was assigned by Chauncey the task of equipping a fleet for the protection of Lake Erie. Arriving at Erie, March 27th, he found that two brigs, the *Niagara* and *Lawrence*, were nearly completed. They were 129 feet long, with 29 feet beam, of 500 tons burden, constructed of white and black oak, with chestnut frames and oak sheathing. Two gunboats were also nearly planked, and the schooner *Scorpion* was just begun. But, although the hulls of his ships were well forward, neither sails, rigging, guns, nor ammunition had yet been provided for them. So our young commander was compelled to make another weary journey to Pittsburg for these supplies, which, after tiresome delays, he at last obtained.

On the 26th of May, Perry joined Captain Chauncey on Lake Ontario for the attack on Fort George, and was assigned to command the boats in the difficult task of debarking the troops, under Colonel Winfield Scott, that co-operated in the movement, which resulted in the evacuation of that stronghold by the British on May 27th.

One result of this success for the American army was the subsequent evacuation of Fort Erie by the British, which left the Niagara River open, and Captain Perry thus succeeded in getting the captured brig *Caledonia*, the purchased schooners *Somers*, *Tigress*, and *Ohio*, and the sloop *Trippe* out of the Niagara River, where they

had been blockaded by the enemy. In accomplishing this work Perry tracked the vessels with several yokes of oxen up the stream to Erie against the swift current, and, after infinite labor, brought them safely out into the harbor. He found, however, that there was less than seven feet of water on the bar, and another important obstacle was the presence of Captain Robert Heriot Barclay's fleet at the entrance of the lake where that British officer was maintaining a strict blockade. Captain Barclay was a skilful seaman of approved courage who had served under Nelson at Trafalgar, where he was severely wounded, and he had lost an arm in another engagement with the French. Lieutenant Buchan, who commanded the *Lady Prevost*, had also served with distinction under Nelson. It was against these proved, veteran commanders that our young captain was to try conclusions.

Captain Barclay kept himself informed, through spies, of the preparations being made by Perry; and, on August 2d, as the Americans did not seem yet ready to move, the English captain sailed across to the Canadian side of the lake. It was afterward said that he had gone to accept an invitation to a public dinner.

Perry grasped the opportunity and at once proceeded to get the *Lawrence* over the bar. Her guns were hoisted out and landed, as well as all other heavy material, two large scows were brought alongside, filled with water to bring them down to the water's edge, and heavy timbers were then run through the brig's ports and blocked up from the scows. On the afternoon of the fourth the water was pumped out of the scows, the brig was lifted two feet, and was thus floated down to the bar. To the disappointment of Perry, however, it was found that the *Lawrence* was still too deep, and

it was necessary to repeat this operation before she would pass over the bar. This work occupied the entire night, and, just as the *Lawrence* passed over the bar, next morning, Barclay's vessel appeared in sight. The Englishman exchanged a few shots with the schooners which were covering the, as yet, unarmed *Lawrence*, but he fortunately decided not to bring on an engagement at that time and hauled off. The *Niagara* passed over the bar readily, and Perry proceeded to get his little squadron ready for immediate service. His most pressing need was men, as he had only sailors enough for one ship. In a letter to the Secretary of the Navy he says, "Give me men, sir, and I will acquire both for you and myself honor and glory on this lake or perish in the attempt." To Commodore Chauncey he writes, "For God's sake and your own and mine send me men and officers and I will have the enemy in a day or two." But only a few men, and those of an indifferent kind, were sent to him, and, hearing that the enemy proposed to send an expedition against him to burn his ships, Perry threw up hasty breastworks to protect his vessels against an attack by land. By the end of July, Perry mustered three hundred men to man his ten vessels, and this paltry force was increased to 490, mainly by a reinforcement from General Harrison of 100 Kentuckians, of whom three quarters were green hands, soldiers, and negroes. And with this force, on September 10th, he won his glorious victory.

On the 18th of August, Perry sailed on a cruise to break his men in to their duties, and, sending the *Ohio* down the lake, the other vessels went in to Put-in-Bay.

At daylight on September 10th, the British fleet was sighted to the northwestward, and the American fleet

at once got under way, sometimes towing with boats, as the wind was light and baffling at N.E. Perry hoisted at the peak of the *Lawrence* a large motto flag, bearing the dying words of the gallant commander of the *Chesapeake*, "Don't give up the ship." Barclay's fleet was in close column, heading S.W., in the following order: *Chippeway*, 1; *Detroit*, 19, Captain Barclay; *Hunter*, 10; *Queen Charlotte*, 17; *Lady Prevost*, 13; and *Little Belt*, 3.

Finding it difficult to weather Bass Islands, Perry determined to wear and run to leeward of them. His sailing-master suggested that this would cause them to engage the enemy to leeward. "I don't care," replied Perry, "to windward or to leeward, they shall fight to-day!" But as he spoke the wind shifted and the American fleet fortunately fetched to windward of the islands and retained the weather-gage. The American ships came down with the wind on the port beam in column ahead obliquely: The *Ariel*, 4, Lieutenant John H. Packet; and *Scorpion*, 2, Master Stephen Champlin, leading, both on the weather-bow of the *Lawrence*, 20, Capt. O. H. Perry; next the *Caledonia*, 3, Lieutenant Daniel Turner; *Niagara*, 20, Captain Jesse D. Elliott; *Somers*, 2, Lieut. A. H. M. Conklin; *Porcupine*, 1, Acting Master George Serrat; *Tigress*, 1, Master Thomas C. Almy; and *Trippe*, 1, Lieutenant Thomas Holdup.

As it was close to the dinner hour, the noonday grog was served with biscuit, and after that was consumed every one went to quarters, and Perry passed through the ship, inspecting every gun and speaking a word of encouragement to the men. Seeing some of the *Constitution's* crew with whom he had served, he said, "Well, boys, are you ready?" They touched their

hats and answered, after the fashion of the day, "All ready, your honor!" As he came to the men from his former Newport flotilla, many of them the sons of his old neighbors, he said, "I need not say anything to you. You know how to beat those fellows." Perry then retired to his cabin, and, after destroying his private papers, wrapped his public documents in lead ready to be thrown overboard in the event of capture.

Barclay expected an easy victory, and, as his ships bore down upon the American fleet at eleven o'clock, the bugle sounded from the *Detroit*, and the whole line gave three sturdy British cheers. The ships had been lately painted, their rigging was freshly tarred down, and they presented a very fine appearance with ensigns and pennants flying from peaks and mastheads.

The *Detroit* opened the action with a shot from her long 24-pounder to try the range, which fell short, but the second struck and passed through the *Lawrence*, as the *Scorpion* responded with her long 32. At 11.55 the *Lawrence* opened with her long 12's; at 12 M. she began to fire her carronades, but their shot fell short. By this time the action became general, although, as the wind was so light, the sternmost of the American vessels were not within range. As the *Lawrence* closed very slowly she suffered severely before her short broadside guns came into range, as she was receiving the concentrated fire of the thirty long guns of the *Chippeway*, *Detroit*, and *Hunter*, and every brace and bowline was shot away. Meanwhile, the *Caledonia*, *Niagara*, and *Somers* were engaged at long range with the *Hunter* and *Queen Charlotte*, while the smaller American vessels were engaging the *Prevost* and *Little Belt* far astern. By 12.20 the *Lawrence*, with the *Scorpion* and *Ariel*, came to close quarters, with the

Detroit and *Chippeway* at canister range, and about this time the *Ariel's* long 12 burst, while one of the *Scorpion's* carronades, in consequence of overloading, was upset down the hatchway. Fortunately, the *Caledonia* drew into the fight with the *Hunter*, but the *Niagara*, well at a distance, was almost entirely uninjured.

For fully one hour Perry fought three ships, receiving the fire of the *Detroit*, *Hunter*, and *Lady Prevost*, while he was practically unsupported. One by one the guns of the *Lawrence* were dismounted, her spars were shattered, and her sails were hanging in shreds and tatters, while out of a complement of 103 men, 83 had been killed and wounded. The first lieutenant, John J. Yarnall, came to Perry with his face covered with blood and said: "All the officers of my division are cut down. Can I have others?" Perry sent his personal aids, but in a few minutes Yarnall returned, saying: "Those officers have been cut down; I need more." Perry replied: "I have no more to give you. You must endeavor to make out by yourself." "All right, sir," was the response, as the lieutenant returned to his division. Three times this officer was wounded and taken to the cockpit, but each time he returned to his post after his wounds were dressed.

Perry had several very narrow escapes. One of the after-guns seemed to be disabled, and Perry advanced to see what was the matter. The captain of the gun, one of the *Constitution's* crew, said, "I can fire it, sir," and was just about to do so when a twenty-four-pound shot passed through his body and he fell at Perry's feet. Lieutenant John Brooks, in command of the marines, was speaking to Perry when he was struck in the thigh by a cannon-ball, which carried him across

the deck. Shrieking with pain, he implored Perry to shoot him and end his agony.

In the cockpit of the *Lawrence*, which was above the water-line, the carnage was fearful, several men being struck by shot while they were undergoing operations. Midshipman Henry Lamb, after having his shattered arm dressed, was struck in the side by a 24-pound shot and instantly killed, while an Indian sailor was killed in the same manner. Yet, when Perry called down to know if any of the wounded could pull a rope, several of the gallant fellows crawled up on deck to do what they could.

By half-past two, with the aid of Chaplain Breeze and Purser Hambleton, Perry had fired the last gun that was left mounted on the deck of the *Lawrence*, and it was evident to him that the *Niagara* must be brought up to save the day. He therefore gave orders to Lieutenant Yarnall to hold out to the last, and, manning his boat with his brother James and four seamen, he was shoving off from the *Lawrence*, when Hosea Sargeant hauled down the blue flag with the motto, "Don't give up the ship," and tossed it to Perry in the sternsheets of the cutter.

For a time the battle smoke concealed this movement from the sight of the enemy, but at last they opened upon the boat, one shot striking her, but, fortunately, not inflicting serious damage, and Perry reached the *Niagara* and, climbing up her side, assumed command of the ship, hoisting his broad pennant and the flag with Lawrence's dying words at the masthead.

As he came over the side, Elliott met Perry and asked how the day was going. "Badly," was the reply. He had lost all his men and the *Lawrence* was a wreck. He then asked what the gunboats were doing

so far astern, and Elliott offered to bring them up. Perry consented and Elliott left in the *Laurence's* boat on that mission. Perry at once backed the *Niagara's* maintopsail, hauled up the main-trysail and, putting the helm up, squared the yards and bore straight down with the freshening breeze for the enemy, setting his topgallant-sails, and making signal for close action. This bold manœuvre was received with cheers by the American fleet, which seemed to be at once inspired with renewed life for the second stage of the conflict.

As Perry bore down on them, the *Detroit* made an effort to wear to bring her starboard battery to bear, as seven of her port guns had been disabled by the fire from the *Laurence*. In doing this she fouled the *Queen Charlotte*, and the two British ships lay together, head and stern, as the *Niagara*, breaking the enemy's line, backed her maintopsail and passed slowly under the bows of the *Detroit*, pouring a deadly raking fire of grape and canister into both vessels with her starboard battery. At the same time she was raking the sterns of the *Lady Prevost* and *Little Belt* with her port battery, while the Kentucky riflemen in the tops were picking off every enemy visible on their decks.

In obedience to Perry's signal, the *Caledonia* followed the *Niagara*, pouring in her broadside; while the *Ariel*, the *Somers*, now commanded by Elliott, and the *Scorpion*, *Tigress*, and *Porcupine* came down with the breeze and tackled the other British vessels with furious onslaught.

At 2.30, when Perry shifted his flag from the *Laurence*, the British believed the victory was theirs, and hearty cheers resounded through their fleet as the American broad pennant came down from the disabled flagship. Thirty minutes later at 3 P.M. an officer

BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE

From a painting by W. H. Powell

appeared on the taffrail of the *Hunter*, waving a white handkerchief on a boarding-pike as a token of surrender, and Perry had thus snatched victory from defeat, and, for the first time in her long and brilliant naval history, an entire British fleet surrendered at discretion.

At this signal the fire of our vessels ceased, and Perry, again changing his flag, took his boat and returned to the *Lawrence* that he might receive the surrender of the British fleet upon her battle-scarred decks.

As Perry reached his ship the heroic survivors of her crew greeted their commander in dignified silence, but with deep emotion. Few were unwounded, all were battle-stained, and the decks were slippery with blood, like the floor of a slaughter-house, and littered with broken spars, dismounted guns, and shattered timbers. As the British officers came on board they carefully picked their way over the bodies of the slain as they came aft to surrender their swords, which Perry requested them to retain.

The loss in the *Lawrence* alone was 22 killed and 61 wounded, out of a total loss for the squadron of 27 killed and 96 wounded, or 83 in one ship out of a total of 123 for the twelve vessels. The British loss was 41 killed and 94 wounded. Commodore Barclay reported that every commander and every officer second in command in his fleet was disabled. When the *Niagara* bore down and delivered her raking fire, Barclay received a grape-shot in the right shoulder which broke the shoulder-blade to pieces. The gallant Captain had already been wounded, earlier in the action, in the thigh.

After receiving the surrender of the British fleet, Perry took an old letter from his pocket, and, on the blank sheet, wrote to General Harrison as follows:

DEAR GENERAL,—We have met the enemy, and they are ours!—two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop.

Yours with great respect and esteem,

O. H. PERRY.

To the Secretary of the Navy he wrote:

SIR: It has pleased the Almighty to give to the arms of the United States a signal victory over their enemies on this lake. The British squadron, consisting of two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop, have this moment surrendered to the force under my command after a sharp conflict. I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully,

Your Obt. Servant,

O. H. PERRY.

Hon. WILLIAM JONES,
Secretary of the Navy.

The day after the battle Perry shifted his flag to the *Ariel*, and, putting all the sick and wounded on board the *Lawrence*, sent her to Erie as a hospital-ship. He also visited Captain Barclay on board the *Detroit* and proffered his sympathy and every available comfort to his wounded prisoner, with the assurance that his parole should be effected, which that officer finally obtained at Perry's personal request.

At nine o'clock on September 11th, the officers killed in action on both sides were buried near the shore of the lake at Put-in-Bay with military honors. Perry and the American and British officers marched two and two, and the drums and fifes of both squadrons played the *Dead March*, while minute-guns were fired from the ships of both squadrons.

The comparative force of the two combatants in this fight is variously stated, no two accounts agreeing exactly. Roosevelt asserts that the superiority of the

Americans in long-gun metal was nearly as three is to two, and in carronade metal greater than two to one. He gives Perry nine vessels, of 1671 tons, with 532 in crews (416 fit for duty), his vessels throwing 936 pounds of metal in broadside. To Barclay he awards six vessels, of 1460 tons, with 440 in crew, the British throwing 459 pounds of metal in broadside.

But, even granting these figures are correct, it must be remembered that the *Niagara* and three of the American schooners were practically out of the fight until after the *Lawrence* had been disabled, and also that the *Ariel* and *Scorpion* each lost one of their 32's in the very beginning of the fight. The thirty-five long guns of Barclay's fleet, to Perry's fifteen, was also an important advantage, as a great portion of the action was fought at long range and the *Lawrence* was severely cut up by the *Detroit's* long guns before she could bring her carronades into effective play.

It is also an important factor that Barclay's fleet was manned by 150 seamen from the royal navy, 80 hardy Canadian sailors, and 240 British regular soldiers; while Perry's crews were made up mainly of raw recruits and volunteer soldiers, with a few sailors brought overland from New England. When the *Lawrence* went into action she had 34 of her complement of 137 on the sick-list.

The result of this victory was momentous in the extreme, for, had it gone the other way, General Proctor, with the Indian chief, Tecumseh, was at Malden with five thousand men, ready to cross the frontier and lay waste the territory of the United States. But, on September 23d, Perry carried General Harrison's army across the lake, and, at the battle of the Thames,

Proctor was signally defeated, and Tecumseh, a brave and relentless enemy of the Americans, was killed. Four days later Perry co-operated with the army in the reoccupation of Detroit, and our northwest territory was soon freed from British occupation.

Perry was at once promoted to Captain, and received the thanks of Congress and a gold medal. The city of Boston presented him with a set of silver; other cities voted him thanks, while the country rang with the public rejoicings. A gold medal was also awarded by Congress to Captain Elliott, silver medals to each of the commissioned officers, and swords to the nearest male relatives of the officers killed in battle. Congress also voted $255,000 prize-money to the captors of the British fleet, of which sum Commodore Chauncey (who was on Lake Ontario when the battle was fought) received the lion's share—$12,750, while Perry would have had only $7140, if Congress had not voted him $5000 additional compensation.

On October 25th, Perry resigned his command on Lake Erie and was ordered to the command of the new frigate *Java*, 44, then fitting out at Baltimore, and he was subsequently with Decatur in his operations against Algiers. While commanding the naval station in the West Indies, Perry died of yellow fever in Port Spain, island of Trinidad, on August 23d, 1819, and his body was sent home in a man-of-war to his native town, Kingston, R. I. A monument was there erected over his grave, while both at Newport and Cleveland, Ohio, statues have been set up to the memory of this brilliant naval officer.

At the conclusion of the War of 1812, the *Lawrence*, with other vessels of the squadron, was dismantled and laid up, and she was subsequently sold.

A torpedo-boat, to be called the *Lawrence*, of 400 tons, 8400 horse-power and two guns, is now (1902) under construction at the works of the Fore River Ship Building Company, at Weymouth, Mass.

CHAPTER XII

THE "SARATOGA"

THE first vessel of that name in our service was a purchased ship, mounting eighteen guns, commanded by Captain John Young, which, early in October, 1780, captured the British ship *Charming Molly*, of twenty-two guns and ninety men. This vessel was carried by boarders led by Lieutenant Joshua Barney. There were two English brigs in company, the *Elizabeth*, 12, and *Nancy*, 14, both of which were also captured after a brief resistance. They were all from Jamaica, loaded with rum and sugar, and would have been valuable prizes had they not been recaptured a few days later by the British ship *Intrepid*, 74. Lieutenant Barney, who was prize-master, was kept in close confinement on board the *Intrepid* until December, when, by order of Admiral Rodney, he was sent with seventy other American officers to England as prisoners on board the *Yarmouth*, 74. They suffered from cold and from insufficient food for fifty-three days on the passage to Plymouth, and on their arrival were first removed to a prison-ship and were subsequently sent to Mill Prison as "rebels," where they found between two and three hundred of their unfortunate countrymen confined.

From this prison Barney made a most remarkable

escape in the uniform of a British officer he had managed to obtain, and, after many exciting incidents, he succeeded in getting safely over to France and thence to Antwerp, where he found passage home in an American privateer. The *Saratoga* was never seen after Barney left her, and she probably foundered with all on board.

The second *Saratoga* was more fortunate, and her name is associated with a great naval victory for the American arms.

In August, 1814, Master-Commandant Thomas Macdonough was appointed to the command of the American naval forces on Lake Champlain, with headquarters at Plattsburg Bay. Macdonough was born December 23, 1780, and received his midshipman's warrant in 1800, one year after Perry. He served in the Tripolitan War and was one of the young officers who accompanied Decatur in his perilous feat of burning the *Philadelphia*, February 16, 1804.

Macdonough was sent to Lake Champlain to relieve Lieutenant Sydney Smith, who, on June 3d, had chased the British gunboats stationed near the head of Soel River too far up the stream, and had there lost his two armed sloops, the *Growler* and *Eagle*, after a three-hours conflict with the British vessels, aided by the land forces. With the possession of these sloops the command of the lake fell into the hands of the British, and it was Macdonough's task to construct a new navy on Lake Champlain and endeavor to regain our former pre-eminence on those waters. How well this was accomplished we shall see.

Sir George Prevost, with a force of fourteen hundred veterans, was at the lower end of Lake Champlain, where ships were being built to carry them up the lake, while Macdonough was equally busy at Plattsburg

preparing to oppose the threatened invasion. Within forty days from the time the trees had been standing in the forest that furnished the timber of which the *Saratoga* was built at Vergennes, Vt., she was launched and immediately received her armament of eight long 24's and eighteen smaller guns. The brig *Eagle*, 20 guns, the schooner *Ticonderoga*, 17, and the sloop *Preble*, 7, with ten gunboats carrying sixteen guns, were also soon ready for service. The British commander, Captain Downie, had in readiness to oppose this force the frigate *Confiance*, 39 guns; the brig *Linnet*, 16 guns; the sloops *Chubb* and *Finch*, and thirteen large galleys armed with one gun each.

On Sunday morning, September 11, 1814, one year and a day after Perry's victory on Lake Erie, the British squadron stood up to Plattsburg Bay, where the American fleet awaited them at anchor in line formation. There was little breeze, and the British ships formed a line parallel to the Americans. The *Eagle* opened the action with a broadside which fell short, when the *Saratoga* at once replied, Macdonough sighting and firing the first gun, the shot raking the deck of the *Confiance* and shattering her wheel. The brave Downie, however, held his fire, working his ship nearer the *Saratoga*, and not until he had anchored in a favorable position did he return Macdonough's fire. When this manœuvre was effected, however, he opened a hot and very accurate broadside fire which was terribly destructive, forty of the Americans being killed or wounded within a few minutes, Peter Gamble, the first lieutenant of Macdonough's flagship, among them. But the *Saratoga's* return fire was equally destructive, and a shot from this ship striking the muzzle of a gun on the deck of the *Confiance* it was thrown from its car-

riage, striking Captain Downie, who was instantly killed by the shock, although his skin was not broken.

The *Saratoga's* starboard battery being now all dismounted or disabled, with the exception of one gun, Macdonough let go a stern anchor, cut the bower-cable, and, with springs on the stern-cable, winded the ship to bring the port broadside to bear. The *Confiance* attempted the same manœuvre, but when half warped she hung, and, thus exposed to the raking fire of the *Saratoga* and the *Eagle*, she was compelled to strike within fifteen minutes. The British sloop that was opposed to the *Eagle* and the one engaging our galleys also struck; and the British galleys, finding the day was lost, made off and escaped by using their sweeps.

The ships on both sides in this brief engagement were badly cut up, the *Saratoga* having fifty-five shot holes in her hull and the *Confiance* 105, while the smaller vessels were equally injured. The loss on the American side was about two hundred, and of the British about three hundred were killed and wounded. Captain Macdonough declined to receive the swords of his brave enemies, and every attention was extended to their wounded, while the dead were buried at Plattsburg with military honors on September 13th.

As in the case of the battle on Lake Erie, the moral effect of this victory was of the greatest importance, as Sir George Prevost at once abandoned his attempt to invade our territory and fell back in confusion to Canada. Three months later the treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain was signed at Ghent on December 24, 1814.

In recognition of his victory, Macdonough was made captain and received a gold medal from Congress, while the State of Vermont presented him with an estate at

Cumberland Head, overlooking the scene of the engagement, which is still held in the family. The *Confiance* was taken into our service and for years was rated in the same class as the *Constellation*.

COMPARATIVE FORCE

	Vessels	Tons	Men	Guns	Broadside Metal
American.....	14	2244	882	86	1194
British.....	16	2402	937	92	1192

The *Saratoga* was sold at Whitehall in 1824.

The third *Saratoga* was built at Portsmouth, N. H., in 1842, at a cost of $159,169. She was rated as a first-class sloop-of-war, of 882 tons, carrying four 8-inch-shell guns and eighteen 32-pounders, with a complement of 210 officers and men. On her first cruise, under Commander J. Tatnall, she was dismantled in a gale on the coast, March 17, 1843, and, returning to Portsmouth, was refitted, and sailed, May 3, 1843, to join Commodore M. C. Perry's squadron on the coast of Africa. In 1845–46, under Commodore Isaac Shubrick, she was in Commodore D. Connor's West India squadron. In 1847 she was commanded by Commander David G. Farragut in Commodore Matthew C. Perry's West India squadron. From 1848 to 1849, under Commander W. C. Nicholson, she was in the West Indies in Commodore F. A. Parker's squadron; and in September, 1850, she sailed for the East Indies under Commander W. S. Walker.

The *Saratoga* remained on the Asiatic station until 1854, when she returned to Boston and refitted. From 1856 to 1860 she was in the Home squadron, in turn under Commanders Edward F. Tilton, Frederick Chatard, and Thomas Turner. In 1861 she was on the coast of Africa in command of Commander Alfred Tay-

COMMODORE THOMAS MACDONOUGH, U.S.N.

From an engraving of the painting by J. W. Jarvis

lor, and on April 20th she captured the ship *Nightingale* of Boston at Kabenda, with a cargo of 961 slaves on board. Lieut. J. J. Guthrie was sent as prize-master, and the *Nightingale* arrived at New York in thirty-two days from Liberia, where she had landed the rescued slaves. The officers and crew of the *Saratoga* suffered severely from ship-fever during the voyage home. Captain William Glendy relieved Captain Taylor in August, 1861; and in February, 1862, the *Saratoga* was ordered to Cadiz, where she was to endeavor to overhaul the *Sumter*, a task which, it is needless to say, she did not accomplish.

In 1865 the *Saratoga* was in the South Atlantic squadron, in command of Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Edgar Brodhead, and, in 1868, was commanded by Commander John H. Upshur. From 1872 to 1877 she was laid up at Norfolk and Washington, and in 1878 she was sent to sea as a training-ship for naval apprentices, being at different times, up to 1887, in command of Commanders Henry C. Taylor, W. H. Whitney, and Charles H. Davis. For the past ten years the *Saratoga* has been loaned to the State of Pennsylvania as a nautical training-ship for that commonwealth and is doing excellent service.

CHAPTER XIII

THE "FULTON"

ALTHOUGH without a war record, the *Fulton* may fairly be considered a "historic ship," as she was the first steam vessel of war in the United States Navy, or, for that matter, in any other navy. In 1813, Robert Fulton, who, as early as 1807, was the first person to apply steam to navigation for commercial purposes in the steamer *Clermont*, submitted to President Madison plans for a steam battery to be used against the ships of Great Britain, with whom we were then at war. Madison favored the project, and in March, 1814, Congress authorized the building of one or more batteries for coast defence.

Under this act one battery was laid down at A. & N. Brown's shipyard on the East River in New York, her boilers and machinery being constructed at Fulton's Engine Works on the North River. Robert Fulton was the engineer, or superintendent, of the whole construction, and he named his battery *Demologos*,—"Voice of the People,"—very much as Ericsson, about a half century later, called his battery *Monitor*, as "an admonition to the monarchies of Europe to remodel their fleets." The vessel was named *Fulton* by the Navy Department, however, in honor of her inventor.

In the construction of this ingenious battery, Fulton departed widely from all known models and produced a war vessel that, had she been completed before the end of the War of 1812, would beyond doubt have inflicted as severe a blow upon the enemy's ships that had harried our coasts as did the *Merrimac* upon the Federal fleet in Hampton Roads in 1862, and, as in Ericsson's case, Fulton, in such an event, would have revolutionized naval warfare.

The *Fulton* cost $320,000 when she was launched on October 19, 1814. Her tonnage was 2475, her length, 156 feet; beam, 56 feet; depth, 20 feet. She was fitted with a centre wheel 16 feet in diameter; length of bucket, 14 feet; and dip, 4 feet. Her engine had a 48-foot cylinder, 5-foot stroke, and her boiler length was 22 feet. She was built upon two hulls, the keels separated from end to end by a canal 15 feet wide and 66 feet long. One boat contained the copper caldrons for preparing steam; the machinery occupied the other hull, the water-wheel revolving in the space between the hulls. The main- or gun-deck was protected by bulwarks of solid timber, 4 feet 10 inches thick, pierced with 30 port-holes. Her upper or spar-deck had high bulwarks to protect the large body of riflemen it was proposed to carry in addition to the crew. Beside her steam power she had two short masts rigged with lateen sails, at the suggestion of Commodore Porter. She also had two bowsprits with jibs, and four rudders, so that she could be steered either way. The *Fulton* was supplied with a furnace for heating red-hot shot and a powerful engine intended to discharge an immense body of water on an enemy's deck and into her port-holes.

The armament of this monster was twenty 32-

pounders and two 100-pounder Columbiads. These latter were fitted in each bow so as to discharge a 100-pound shot into an enemy ten feet below the water-line. The commissioners appointed to examine the *Fulton* reported: "It must be allowed that she has the appearance, at least, of being the most formidable engine of warfare that human ingenuity has contrived."

In June, 1815, she made her trial trip under command of Captain David Porter, but never went to sea, as peace was soon after ratified with Great Britain before the ship could be tested in combat with the enemy.

In 1824, when General Lafayette came to New York, the commandant of the Naval Station invited the distinguished visitor to the navy yard, and while there he inspected the *Fulton*. Lafayette's secretary says of her in his journal:

> We visited the fine steam frigate. That formidable machine resembles a floating fortress. Her sides, supported by a strong construction, are cannon proof; her motion, necessarily very slow, does not permit her to manœuvre in the open sea, but renders her not less fit for the defence of coasts whose ports she can go to protect at will, when menaced by an enemy.

The *Fulton* lay at the Brooklyn Navy Yard as a receiving ship, under command of Master-Commandant J. T. Newton, until the 4th of June, 1829, when her magazine was fired, as was supposed, by a gunner's mate who had been flogged that morning for drunkenness, and the vessel was blown to pieces, killing Lieutenant Breckinridge and twenty-three others of her crew and wounding nineteen others.

In 1835, the second *Fulton* was built at New York, under the direction of Marine Engineer Charles H.

Haswell. She was launched in 1837, costing $308,196. This vessel was a side-wheel sloop-of-war, of 1200 tons, 180 feet in length, 35 feet beam, draught 10 feet 6 inches, with horizontal engines on the upper deck and huge exposed paddle-wheels, 22 feet in diameter, standing high in the air. The *Fulton* had a powerful armament, but with her exposed engines and paddle-wheels she was anything but an effective war vessel. She was employed on the coast under Captain Matthew C. Perry, from 1838 to 1840, and from 1841 to 1842 under Captains J. T. Newton and B. Cooper. Captain Perry reported: "For harbor and coast defence, the *Fulton*, with slight alterations, would be perfectly efficient and more useful than any number of vessels not propelled by steam."

In 1842 she was laid up in ordinary, and in 1851 was razeed at the New York yard.

As a razee, the *Fulton* was employed in the West Indies in 1852–53, under command of Commanders T. G. Benham and C. H. Jackson. Under sail and dragging her wheels, which were stationary, she made but five knots, but under steam alone she made fifteen miles an hour. In 1858, the *Fulton*, with the *Water Witch*, *Harriet Lane*, and several other vessels, the fleet under command of Flag-Officer W. B. Shubrick, accompanied by a special United States Commissioner, proceeded up the La Plata River to Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, where they arrived, January 25, 1859, to demand reparation from that government for the insult to our flag when the *Water Witch* was fired upon from a Paraguayan fort in 1855. After receiving a satisfactory apology from President Lopez and a suitable indemnity for an American seaman killed at the time of the outrage, the *Fulton* returned home to

the Pensacola Navy Yard in 1859, and when that yard was seized by the Confederates in January, 1861, the ship fell into their possession, and was later destroyed to prevent her from falling into our hands when Pensacola was surrendered.

CHAPTER XIV

THE "HARTFORD"

AS the frigate *Constitution* is tenderly preserved by a patriotic people as a national memorial of the brilliant naval victories with which her name is so closely associated, so the *Hartford*, for three years the flagship of Admiral David Glasgow Farragut, has been rebuilt at a price far exceeding the original cost of her construction, and is still retained on the list of vessels in commission, the last seagoing ship of the navy of the Civil War. The old ship's fighting days are past, for the *Hartford* is well-nigh as obsolete, by comparison with our ironclad battleships, as the *Constitution*, but both ships are hallowed by glorious memories, and together they form links in the naval history of this nation from its very birth, more than a century and a quarter ago, down to the present day.

The *Hartford* was built at the Charlestown Navy Yard in 1858. She was a screw steam sloop-of-war of 1790 tons, full ship-rigged, with a battery of twenty-two 9-inch smooth-bore guns in broadside and two rifled 20-pounder Parrott-guns. On her first cruise, in 1860–62, in command of Captain Charles Lowndes, she was the flagship of Commodore C. K. Stribling in the East India squadron, and she returned home in the summer of 1862.

When the dark clouds of the Civil War, that had long been gathering, broke in 1861, of the forty-two vessels of the United States Navy then in commission, nearly all that were fairly serviceable were far away from home on foreign stations. Of the five first-class sloops-of-war that were to become the most prominent in the coming struggle,—the *Hartford*, *Richmond*, *Pensacola*, *Brooklyn*, and *Lancaster*,—only the *Brooklyn* was in home waters, at Pensacola. The *Hartford* was in the East Indies, the *Richmond* was the flagship of the Mediterranean squadron, and the *Lancaster* was at Panama. The available ships in the Home Squadron were the *Sabine*, 50; *Brooklyn*, 25; *Cumberland*, 24; *Macedonian*, 22; *Powhatan*, 11; *Pawnee*, 10; *Wyandotte*, 5; *St. Louis*, 20; *Pocahontas*, 5; *Mohawk*, 5; and *Crusader*, 8.

In December, 1861, Farragut was summoned to Washington, whence he soon wrote a hurried note to his devoted wife:

> Keep your lips closed, and burn my letters, for perfect silence is to be observed—the first injunction of the Secretary. I am to have a flag in the Gulf, and the rest depends upon myself. Keep calm and silent. I shall sail in three weeks.

It affords matter for thought that the two principal military figures of the Civil War—Grant at the head of the army and Farragut the first Admiral of the Navy—should both have passed middle life without achieving special distinction in their chosen professions, and that both should have been brought into prominence by a seemingly happy chance at the very moment when their services were the most needed by the nation.

At that time Captain David Glasgow Farragut was

sixty years and six months old, thus lacking but eighteen months of the age fixed by Congress for the compulsory retirement of naval officers, Farragut had been fifty-two years in the service, and had attained the grade of captain, but since he incurred the displeasure of Commodore Matthew C. Perry in 1847, when he had asked to be relieved either of the command of the *Saratoga* or from under Perry's command, Farragut had not been in high favor at the Navy Department. In 1860 he was a member of a naval-retiring board in Brooklyn, a duty that is rarely given to officers desired for active service. While thus engaged, the Confederate steamer *Sumter* escaped from the Mississippi River, and Farragut at once asked the Secretary of the Navy to send him in chase of her with a swift vessel, but this suggestion was not approved.

When, in the early winter of 1861, the authorities were casting about for a naval commander-in-chief for the proposed secret expedition against New Orleans, Commander David D. Porter suggested the name of Captain Farragut for the position, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy Gustavus V. Fox seconded this proposal. The fact that Farragut was of Southern birth caused some hesitation on the part of the President and Secretary Welles, but Porter's assurances of the unwavering loyalty of Farragut, and the strenuous efforts of Fox prevailed, and Farragut was selected for this highly important command.

On January 9, 1862, Captain David Glasgow Farragut was formally appointed commander of the fleet about to be sent to reduce the fortifications below New Orleans, or, if found necessary, to run past the forts and thus cut them off from the city above which was their base of supplies. He sailed in the *Hartford* from

Hampton Roads on February 3, 1862, as flag-officer of the West Gulf blockading squadron, specially charged with the reduction of the defences guarding the approaches to New Orleans.

> There will be attached to your squadron [said his instructions], a fleet of bomb vessels and armed steamers enough to manage them, all under command of Commander D. D. Porter, who will be directed to report to you. . . . When these formidable vessels arrive, and you are completely ready, you will collect such vessels as can be spared from the blockade and proceed up the Mississippi River and reduce the defences which guard the approaches to New Orleans, when you will appear off that city and take possession of it under the guns of your squadron and hoist the American flag therein, keeping possession until troops can be sent to you. If the Mississippi expedition from Cairo shall not have descended the river, you will take advantage of the panic to push a strong force up the river to take all the defences in the rear.

In the light of past history it is interesting to read these instructions, and note with what absolute literalness and success they were fulfilled—from first to last. Within the next five months, on July 3, 1862, Farragut's victorious fleet met the gunboats of Captain Charles H. Davis above the Confederate batteries at Vicksburg, having meanwhile "taken all the defences in the rear" up to that point.

Farragut arrived with the *Hartford* at Ship Island on February 20th, having stopped at Key West on the way, and, after relieving Commodore McKean, he immediately began the work of organizing his squadron for the important operations before him.

Although New Orleans has a water approach through

Lakes Borgne and Pontchartrain, the shallowness of these lakes prevented any attack by that route except by very light-draught boats. The city is on the left bank of the Mississippi, one hundred and five miles from the mouth of that river. Twenty-five miles above the "Passes" at the mouth of the Mississippi were two forts, St. Philip on the left bank, and Jackson on the right. These works had a combined armament of one hundred and twenty-six guns, many of them of large calibre. An additional defence was a strong chain cable stretched across the river a quarter of a mile below Fort St. Philip, where the stream is only seven hundred yards wide. This chain was supported by rafts and hulks, and defended by a water battery. Under cover of the fort was a fleet of thirteen gunboats, including the powerful ironclad battery *Louisiana* and the ironclad ram *Manassas*.

To meet this formidable display of force, Farragut had the steam sloops *Hartford*, 24 guns; *Richmond*, 26; *Pensacola*, 24; *Brooklyn*, 24; *Mississippi*, 12; *Iroquois*, 9; *Oneida*, 9; sailing sloop-of-war *Portsmouth*, 17; steam-gunboats *Varuna*, 12; *Cayuga*, 6; and *Winona*, *Katahdin*, *Itasca*, *Kineo*, *Wissahickon*, *Pinola*, *Kennebec*, and *Sciota*, 4 guns each. The frigate *Colorado*, 48, was attached to the squadron, but as she could not be got over the bar this powerful frigate was of no service in the contemplated attack. With the twenty mortar schooners were the steamers *Harriet Lane*, 4; *Miami*, 7; *Westfield*, 6; *Clifton*, 6; and *Owasco*, 5.

But although the Navy Department had made all these preparations, the appointment of Edwin M. Stanton as Secretary of War came at last, in the very nick of time to save the New Orleans expedition, which was at that juncture in a fair way to come to grief. From the

very first General McClellan had looked with disfavor upon General Butler and upon the proposed movement against New Orleans, in which Butler was to have the military command, and he apparently did his best to thwart it. The threatened rupture with Great Britain, as a result of the capture by Captain Wilkes of the Confederate Commissioners Mason and Slidell, while they were passengers on board the British mail steamer *Trent*, caused the movement of the troops destined for New Orleans to be temporarily arrested. On December 13, 1861, General McClellan ordered that upon the arrival of the steamer *Constitution* from Boston at Fortress Monroe, the troops on board should be sent in her to Port Royal, S. C., to reinforce General W. T. Sherman at that point.

This order, had it been carried into effect, would have effectually broken up the New Orleans expedition, but Mr. Stanton was nominated on January 13, 1862, confirmed on the fifteenth, and on the nineteenth the new Secretary entertained General Butler at breakfast. The next day, January 20th, Mr. Stanton entered upon his duties, and on the twenty-second McClellan countermanded his order of the thirteenth, that the troops of the *Constitution* should be sent to Port Royal. On the twenty-fourth Stanton ordered General McClellan to report, without delay, his opinion as to whether the New Orleans expedition should be carried out, and if so, in what manner.

In response McClellan recommended that the troops raised by General Butler be held in reserve "ready to support and reinforce in any quarter where they may be required, and which can only be determined by circumstances in the course of active operations." In conclusion he said definitely that "what was known as

General Butler's expedition ought to be suspended" (Gorham's *Public Services of Edwin M. Stanton*, vol. i., p. 315).

By what might almost seem an interposition of Divine Providence, Secretary Stanton disregarded this recommendation of the General-in-Chief, and Butler was permitted to go on with his arrangements for the expedition to the Gulf, an expedition that made possible the future capture of New Orleans by Farragut, the final opening of the Mississippi, and the Federal occupation of the Gulf States.

But even after obtaining this consent of the Secretary of War, Butler's troubles were not yet ended. McClellan, a past master in the art of procrastination, failed to act on Stanton's orders, and the time was rapidly wearing away when the movement, if it were to be made, should be begun. So Butler conceived of a shrewd plan to expedite matters, which proved successful. On February 12th, he had testified in writing before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, that the rebel strength then before Washington did not exceed 65,000, and submitted official reports of the enemy which proved his assertions. Butler also repeated this statement to the President, and in response to a direct question replied that he would be willing to cross the Potomac with one hundred thousand effective troops, but added, that he only wished to be off to New Orleans. At this the President asked Butler to call upon him again on the twenty-third of the month.

After this interview with Lincoln, and having learned that McClellan had issued an order to disembark his troops at Fortress Monroe and send them to Baltimore, General Butler called on McClellan, and in the course of conversation remarked that the President

had asked him if he would be willing to lead one hundred thousand effective troops against the enemy that was then besieging the capital, and added that he had an apointment with the President for the 23d of February. As he left, Butler casually asked McClellan if he should call upon him again before or after the twenty-third. "Better come before," was the General's response, and on the morning of the twenty-third, McClellan had Butler's orders ready, with instructions to co-operate with the navy in the attack upon New Orleans!

Fearing some sudden change of mind, General Butler sailed from Fortress Monroe on the 25th of February, in the transport *Mississippi*, with sixteen hundred men, and arrived at Ship Island late in March.

The largest of the four barren sand islands that stretch along the Gulf coast, twelve miles from the mainland, ninety-five miles northeast from the mouth of the Mississippi, and about fifty miles west from Mobile Bay, is Ship Island. It is a long, narrow, low-lying waste of fine white sand, about seven miles long and three quarters of a mile wide, containing two square miles of land. At the western end of this sand-spit is a landlocked harbor, with abundant depth of water for the largest vessels.

This desolate spot had been selected as the rendezvous for the army of occupation and for the assembly of the vessels of Farragut's fleet in their preparation for the proposed movement upon New Orleans.

In September, 1861, the Confederates had abandoned Ship Island, which they were preparing to fortify, and Commodore McKean, then in command of the West Gulf Blockading Squadron, immediately occupied the island with 170 sailors and marines under Lieutenant

McKean Buchanan, and held the harbor and island so that it was fortunately available for our purposes as a *pied à terre* when it was needed.

In December, 1861, Gen. G. W. Phelps arrived at Ship Island in the steamer *Constitution* with about two thousand New England troops. Immediately after landing he issued a proclamation addressed "to the loyal citizens of the Southwest" advocating "Free Labor and Workingmen's Rights." This famous document, coming a year before Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, created as great a sensation in the North as it did in the South, and in both sections it was violently condemned by the conservative element, which deemed it highly imprudent.

It was not until March 25th that General Butler, after a series of mishaps, arrived at Ship Island, in the steamer *Mississippi*, having been thirty days on the passage from Hilton Head. In the meantime, Farragut's fleet had gathered, including twenty-two vessels, mounting over two hundred guns, with twenty-one schooners in addition, each carrying a 13-inch mortar, under the immediate command of Commander David D. Porter.

Soon after General Butler's arrival, news reached Ship Island of the successful attack upon our fleet in Hampton Roads by the *Merrimac* and of the fortunate arrival of the little *Monitor* on the following day in time to turn defeat into victory. In view of the easy destruction of the wooden frigates by the Confederate ironclad it was not altogether pleasant for our sailors to read in the New Orleans papers, which occasionally filtered through the enemy's lines to our troops, such paragraphs as this from the New Orleans *Picayune* of April 5, 1862:

In a day or two we shall have ready two iron-cased floating batteries. The plates are four and a half inches thick, of the best hammered iron, received from England and France. Each iron-cased battery will mount twenty 68 pounder guns, placed so as to skim the water, and strike the enemy's hull between wind and water. We also have an abundant supply of incendiary shells, cupola furnaces for molten iron, Congreve rockets, and fire-ships.

Between New Orleans and the forts there is a constant succession of earthworks. At the Plain of Chalmette, near Janin's property, there are redoubts, armed with rifled cannon, which have been found to be effective at five miles, range. A ditch thirty feet wide and twenty deep extends from the Mississippi to La Cipriore.

In Forts St. Philip and Jackson there are three thousand men, of whom a good portion are experienced artillerymen, and gunners who have served in the navy.

At New Orleans itself we have thirty-two thousand infantry, and as many more quartered in the immediate neighborhood. In discipline and drill they are far superior to the Yankees. We have two very able and active generals, who possess our entire confidence, General Mansfield Lovell, and Brigadier-General Ruggles. For commodore, we have old Hollins, a Nelson in his way.

But, meanwhile, Farragut's preparations for the attack upon the forts below New Orleans went on apace, although in the face of many serious obstacles, and during the first week in April the fleet sailed from Ship Island, and the serious work of getting the heavier ships over the bar at the Southwest Pass began. The smaller gunboats passed over with no difficulty, but the larger vessels were compelled to lighten by sending ashore at Pilot Town all their spare spars, anchors, and other movable material, and starting the greater part of their fresh water. However, by April 15th, the last

ship, excepting the *Colorado*, succeeded in getting over the bar, and they all steamed up, first to the Head of the Passes, and later to a bend in the river three miles below Fort Jackson.

On the 8th of April, a detachment of the coast-survey party, attached to the mortar fleet, in charge of Mr. Geddes, began a minute examination of the river banks under cover of the *Owasco* and made the necessary triangulations. On the eighteenth, two divisions, including fourteen vessels of Porter's flotilla, were moored under cover of the trees close to the shore just below Fort Jackson. Porter had painted his mortar-schooners lead-color, and their crews had covered their masts and rigging with branches of trees, so that at a distance the vessels could not be distinguished from the adjoining woods. By this strategy the schooners were placed so that the nearest was but 2850 yards from Fort Jackson and 3680 yards from Fort St. Philip. The other six mortar-schooners were on the opposite bank and farther down the river, screened by the dense growth of reeds, cottonwoods, and willows. The Mississippi was full to the brim and in places the banks were overflowed, so that the country between the vessels and the forts was partially submerged, which prevented night sallies of troops from the Confederate works against the Union fleet.

The ships of Farragut's fleet anchored nearer the middle of the river, the *Hartford* at the head of the column, and on April 18th the bombardment was continued without interruption for five days, the fire being kept up, a portion of the time, night and day.

Farragut had never entertained much confidence in the result of this bombardment, feeling sure that in the end the main brunt of the fight would devolve upon

the ships, but as the scheme was warmly favored by Captain Porter he acquiesced in the arrangement, and gave up five valuable days to an experiment which, outside of its spectacular effect, proved lamentably futile.

On the first day, the citadel was set on fire by the shells, and all the clothing and commissary stores were destroyed. On the nineteenth, the mortar-schooner *Maria J. Carleton* was sunk by a shell from Fort Jackson that passed through her deck and bottom. That day the officers' quarters in the fort were set on fire and consumed. But although five thousand 13-inch shells were thrown into and about the forts their fire upon the fleet did not perceptibly diminish. As a matter of fact, Lieutenant Weitzel, of the United States Engineer Corps, reported, as the result of an inspection of Fort Jackson after the surrender: "It is as strong to-day as when the first shell was fired at it."

While the bombardment was going on, Farragut issued the following orders to the commanding officers of the fleet, which show how carefully he considered the minutest details:

Have a kedge in the mizzen-chains (or any convenient place) on the quarter, with a hawser bent and leading through in the stern chock, ready for any emergency; also grapnels in the boats, ready to hook on to and to tow off fire-ships. Trim your vessel a few inches by the head, so that if she touches the bottom she will not swing head down the river. Put your boat howitzers in the fore- and main-tops, on the boat carriages, and secure them for firing abeam, etc. Should any accident occur to the machinery of the ship, making it necessary to drop down the river, you will back and fill down under sail, or you can drop your anchor and drift down, but in no case attempt to turn

the ship's head down-stream. You will have a spare hawser ready, and when ordered to take in tow your next astern, do so, keeping the hawser slack so long as the ship can maintain her own position, having a care not to foul the propeller.

No vessel must withdraw from battle, under any circumstances, without the consent of the Flag-Officer. You will see that force and other pumps and engine hose are in good order, and men stationed by them, and your men will be drilled to the extinguishing of fires.

Have light Jacob-ladders made to throw over the side for the use of the carpenters in stopping shot-holes, who are to be supplied with pieces of inch board lined with felt, and ordinary nails, and see that the ports are marked, in accordance with the "ordnance instructions," on the berth deck, to show the locality of the shot-holes.

Have many tubs of water about the decks, both for the purpose of extinguishing fire and for drinking. Have a heavy kedge in the port main-chains and a whip on the mainyard, ready to run it up and let fall on the deck of any vessel you may run alongside of, in order to secure her for boarding.

You will be careful to have lanyards on the lever of the screw, so as to secure the gun at the proper elevation and prevent it from running down at each fire. I wish you to understand that the day is at hand when you will be called upon to meet the enemy in the worst form for our profession. You must be prepared to execute all those duties to which you have been so long trained in the navy without having the opportunity of practising. I expect every vessel's crew to be well exercised at their guns, because it is required by the regulations of the service, and it is usually the first object of our attention; but they must be equally well-trained for stopping shot-holes and extinguishing fire. Hot and cold shot will, no doubt, be freely dealt to us, and there must be stout hearts and quick hands to extinguish the one and stop the holes of the other.

I shall expect the most prompt attention to signals and verbal orders, either from myself or the Captain of the Fleet, who, it will be understood, in all cases, acts by my authority.

On April 20th, after a consultation with his commanding officers, the Flag-Officer issued the following final orders:

UNITED STATES FLAG-SHIP *Hartford*,
MISSISSIPPI RIVER, April 20, 1862.

The Flag-Officer, having heard all the opinions expressed by the different commanders, is of the opinion that whatever is to be done will have to be done quickly, or we shall be again reduced to a blockading squadron, without the means of carrying on the bombardment, as we have nearly expended all the shells and fuses and material for making cartridges. He has always entertained the same opinions which are expressed by Commander Porter; that is, there are three modes of attack; and the question is, which is the one to be adopted? His own opinion is, that a combination of two should be made; viz., the forts should be run, and when a force is once above the forts, to protect the troops, they should be landed at quarantine, from the Gulf side, bringing them through the bayou, and then our forces should move up the river, mutually aiding each other as it can be done to advantage.

When, in the opinion of the Flag-Officer, the propitious time has arrived, the signal will be made to weigh and advance to the conflict. If, in his opinion, at the time of arriving at the respective positions of the different divisions of the fleet, we have the advantage, he will make signal for close action, number 8, and abide the result, conquer, or be conquered, drop anchor or keep under way, as in his opinion is best.

Unless the signal above mentioned is made, it will be understood that the first order of sailing will be formed

after leaving Fort St. Philip, and we will proceed up the river in accordance with the original opinion expressed.

The programme of the order of sailing accompanies this general order, and the commanders will hold themselves in readiness for the service as indicated.

D. G. FARRAGUT.
Flag-Officer Western Gulf Blockading Squadron.

On the night of April 21st, Lieut. C. H. B. Caldwell was sent up in the *Itasca*, accompanied by the *Pinola*, Lieutenant Crosby, under the command of Commander H. H. Bell, to cut the chains which were stretched across the river, passing over the decks of several hulks to keep them off the bottom. The *Pinola* had the inventor of a new submarine petard on board, which he placed under one of the hulks, but in endeavoring to explode it the wire broke and it became useless. Lieutenant Caldwell then coolly boarded one of the hulks, and, knocking out the pin and unshackling the chain, let it slip, and the passage was opened. This bold feat was performed under a very heavy fire from the forts, but no one was injured.

On the night of April 23–24, at 3.30 o'clock in the morning, the fleet got under way, Captain Theodorus Bailey leading with his division of eight vessels, having Fort St. Philip as his objective point. These ships, the *Cayuga*, Captain Bailey; *Oneida*, Commander Lee; *Varuna*, Commander C. S. Boggs; *Pensacola*, Captain H. W. Morris; *Mississippi*, Commander M. Smith; *Katahdin*, Lieut. G. H. Preble; *Kineo*, Lieut. G. M. Ransom, and *Wissahickon*, Lieut. A. N. Smith, were soon closely engaged with the fort and with the gunboats of the enemy. The *Cayuga*, passing the fort comparatively uninjured, was immediately surrounded by the Confederate gunboats. One of these she sunk

with an 11-inch shell at close range, another she drove off, and she was then fortunately joined by the *Oneida* and *Varuna*. The *Oneida* rammed one of the enemy's steamers and sent her floating down-stream a wreck, and then went to the assistance of the *Varuna*, that had got ashore on the left bank of the river and was hard pressed by two of the enemy's boats.

These steamers had rammed the *Varuna* so that she speedily sunk, close in to the river-bank, but the *Oneida* forced one of the enemy also into the bank, where she was abandoned by her crew, and she crippled the Confederate steamer *Governor Moore* so seriously that she surrendered. The *Pensacola* now came up and aided in saving the crew of the *Varuna*. The *Mississippi*, the last of the division, was in time to engage the Confederate ironclad *Manassas*, and drove her ashore, riddling her with solid shot. The *Katahdin*, *Kineo*, and *Wissahickon* also passed Fort St. Philip, the latter running on shore twice before she had accomplished her task.

Farragut had intended to lead the van in the *Hartford*, but, yielding to the urgent persuasion of his captains, he consented to lead the second division, followed by the *Brooklyn*, Captain Craven; and *Richmond*, Captain Alden. The *Hartford* came under the fire of Fort Jackson at four o'clock, and in attempting to avoid a fire-raft she grounded near Fort St. Philip. At that moment, the ram *Manassas* pushed a fire-raft under the *Hartford's* port quarter, and she caught fire. Without ceasing the fire of her battery, however, a portion of the crew was summoned to fire quarters and speedily quenched the flames, while the ship was backed into deeper water, but with her head downstream. With difficulty, the *Hartford* was turned upstream against

the swift current of the Mississippi, full to its banks, but this was at last accomplished, and the flagship proceeded on her way, taking the fire of the enemy and responding from both of her batteries at the fort and the Confederate gunboats.

The *Brooklyn* and the *Richmond* fought their way on in the rear of the flagship, both engaging the forts and the steamers as they came in range. It was a free fight that morning, every one for himself, and no one knowing exactly what might be on the cards. That none of our ships engaged a friend was fortunate, for it became utterly impossible to preserve the order of battle in the darkness and confusion of the melée.

The third division, in command of Commander Bell, leading in the *Sciota*, Lieutenant E. Donaldson; the *Iroquois*, Commander John Decamp; and *Pinola*, Lieutenant Pierce Crosby, passed the forts, the *Iroquois* suffering severely; but the *Kennebec*, Lieut. J. H. Russell, and *Winona*, Lieut. E. F. Nichols, failing to pass before broad daylight, when, of course, it was impossible to escape destruction, were compelled to drop back to the mortar fleet, while the *Itasca* received a shot in her boiler, and was obliged to drift down-stream.

The morning of the 24th of April, Farragut found himself above the forts that defended the approach to New Orleans, with fourteen of the seventeen wooden vessels he had started with the night before, and with the enemy's fleet of fifteen vessels, two of them ironclads, captured, dispersed, or destroyed. Nothing could have been more complete than this victory, the result of a feat in naval warfare then absolutely without a precedent, and accomplished with the loss of but one vessel of his squadron, and at a cost of but thirty-seven killed and 147 wounded in the entire fleet.

Farragut at once despatched Captain Boggs, of the ill-fated *Varuna*, in a boat through the bayous in the rear of Fort St. Philip, to inform Commander Porter and General Butler of his success. Whereupon Butler immediately sent troops up by light-draught steamers and boats to a point five miles above St. Philip, while Porter placed five of his mortar-schooners in the bay behind Fort Jackson. The forts, now cut off from New Orleans by Farragut's fleet, were invested on all sides, and as his men soon became mutinous and were rapidly deserting, the Confederate commander, General Duncan, had no choice but to surrender to the Union forces and accept the terms of capitulation offered him by Captain Porter.

Pausing only to give his tired men a hasty breakfast, Farragut pushed on up-river on the twenty-fourth, and at noon the next day passed the Chalmette batteries, silencing them with a few guns and with no loss of life on the Union side. At one o'clock of the same day the victorious fleet anchored before New Orleans in the midst of a furious tropical rain-storm accompanied by thunder and lightning.

The levee was a scene of desolation and the wildest confusion as the Federal fleet appeared. The Confederates had set fire to great piles of cotton bales and hogsheads of sugar, as well as to their formidable iron-clad, the *Mississippi*, which drifted down-stream, smoke pouring out of her ports, while another vessel of the same class, on the stocks at Algiers, had also been fired to prevent her from falling into the hands of the victorious Yankees.

The position of Farragut was very trying during the six days that ensued between his appearance before New Orleans and the arrival of General Butler with

troops to occupy the conquered city. In response to Farragut's demand for the surrender of New Orleans, Mayor Monroe declared he was not the military commander of the city and had no authority to surrender it, and that functionary further said he would not do so if he had the required authority. Applying to General Lovell, that officer said he would not surrender the city nor allow it to be surrendered; that he was overpowered on the water by a superior squadron, but that he intended to fight on land as long as he could muster a soldier. He had marched all of his armed men out of the city, he added, had evacuated it, and if the fleet desired to shell the town, destroying helpless women and children, they could do so.

If it had not been so very serious a matter this action would have partaken strongly of opera bouffe, but Farragut controlled himself admirably, and as the next step toward the solution of the enigma he sent a small party of marines on shore on Sunday morning, and they hoisted the United States flag over the mint and custom house, these being national property. The mayor refused to hoist the flag himself, but intimated that Farragut should do this as his own act.

While the crews of all the ships of the fleet were at prayers "to render thanks," as the general order ran, "to Almighty God for His great goodness and mercy in permitting us to pass through the events of the last two days with so little loss of life and blood," the sharp discharge of a howitzer from the maintop of the *Pensacola* sent every man of the fleet instantly to quarters. Looking on shore, four men were seen on the roof of the mint, who, having pulled down the flag, were hurrying away with it, and half an hour later that flag was being trailed through the streets of the city by a furious mob.

The crews of the ships rushed to quarters, every gun was trained upon the city, and, lockstring in hand, the gun captains stood eagerly awaiting the order that would turn upon the devoted city a deadly hail of shot and shell, while the captains watched for a signal from the flagship. A commander with less discretion than Farragut might have resented this insult to his flag and given the order to fire, but the only intimation from the *Hartford* was the striking of her church pennant and the shrill whistle of the boatswain's mates piping down her crew.

Three days later the army transports came steaming up the river, and as the *Mississippi* ran alongside the levee and the blue-coated soldiers formed in solid ranks, the headquarters band struck up an air the Confederates had written in ridicule, *Picayune Butler has come to town!*—a grim joke that provoked little laughter from the crowds of onlookers.

The navy had indeed captured the city, but they were very glad to turn its future care over to the army, and, as it proved in the end, to a man who was admirably fitted to assume that important charge.

The effect upon the Confederate cause of the loss of New Orleans has been thus summarized by Pollard in his *First Year of the War*, p. 321:

> It annihilated us in Louisiana, diminished our resources and supplies by the loss of one of the greatest grain and cattle countries within the limits of the Confederacy; gave to the enemy the Mississippi River, with all its means of navigation, for a base of operations, and finally led, by plain and irresistible conclusion, to our virtual abandonment of the great and fruitful valley of the Mississippi.

After turning over the military charge of New Orleans to General Butler, the *Hartford* and *Oneida* went

up to Carrollton, about eight miles above the city, where they finished the destruction of the Confederate earthworks, as well as the raft and chain the Confederates had provided to prevent Captain Foote's fleet from approaching New Orleans from up the river.

In compliance with that paragraph of his orders that advised him to "take advantage of the panic to push a strong force up the river," Farragut despatched the *Richmond*, *Oneida*, and *Iroquois* up the Mississippi on May 6th. On the seventh, Baton Rouge surrendered to this fleet, on the twelfth Natchez also surrendered, and on May 18th the ships appeared before Vicksburg and demanded the surrender of that place. After brief consideration this was refused by the city council, and as the little fleet had no armed force to land to compel submission, it was decided to return to New Orleans for further orders from the Commander-in-Chief. A month later Farragut appeared before Vicksburg with the *Hartford*, *Richmond*, *Brooklyn*, six gunboats, and several mortar-boats, accompanied by General Williams with three thousand troops.

The Confederates, however, during the past six weeks had thrown a large force into the city, and in anticipation of this movement had erected a number of formidable batteries, so that the Vicksburg that could have been readily captured in May by the combined force that now appeared before it, was in June well-nigh impregnable.

Early on the morning of June 27th–28th, covered by the fire of the bomb fleet, Farragut's fleet of eight vessels, headed by the *Hartford*, steamed up past the city of Vicksburg, receiving the concentrated fire of the Confederate batteries on the heights, which extended fully three miles, and returning it with a will. The

strong current of the Mississippi prevented our ships from moving at a rate of more than five miles an hour, and it was well-nigh miraculous that all the vessels passed safely in the face of such a tremendous fire, sufering a loss of but fifteen killed and thirty wounded.

So far as reducing the town was concerned, this daring passage of the fleet in broad daylight was ineffectual. Farragut called a council of commanders immediately after anchoring above the batteries, and declared his intention of returning "and trying the batteries again, immediately after breakfast," but he finally yielded to the unanimous opinion of his captains that such a course would only cause an unnecessary loss of life and a possible loss of ships, with no compensating advantage, and Farragut decided to remain for a time where he was, the more as Flag-Officer Charles H. Davis was daily expected to come down the river with his fleet.

A few days later Captain Davis, with the Western gunboat flotilla, effected a junction with Farragut's fleet, and on July 15th an expedition was sent up the Yazoo River including the gunboats *Carondelet*, and *Tyler*, accompanied by the ram *Queen of the West*, the latter having a number of sharpshooters from the army on board. This attempt was a failure, as the gunboats encountered the Confederate ironclad ram *Arkansas*, and were worsted in a running fight, in which both the Union vessels were partially disabled, and the ram made the best of her way down the river. By an unhappy chance the vessels of the Union fleets at the time were all lying with banked fires, to economize coal, and were unable to attack the *Arkansas*. She consequently, passed safely under the batteries of Vicksburg, to the unqualified chagrin of Farragut, Davis, and their several commanders, who

were thus forced to allow an already crippled quarry to escape that was almost within their reach and, under ordinary conditions, should have proved an easy prey.

Admiral Davis writes of this affair (*Life of Charles Henry Davis*, pp. 264, 265):

> If you remember what I have previously told you of Commodore Farragut, you may imagine his excitement at this scene of mortification and rebel triumph. . . . Farragut writes me to join him in placing both squadrons under the guns of the batteries . . . my friend the admiral says we are to act regardless of consequences.

The calmer counsels of Davis prevailed, however, and on the night of the seventeenth, Farragut's fleet, accompanied by the ram *Sumter*, passed down below the batteries, making an ineffectual attempt to destroy the *Arkansas*.

On the twenty-second, Commander W. D. Porter, with the *Essex*, made another attempt to sink the *Arkansas*, aided by the ram *Queen of the West*, but this was also a failure, and two days later Farragut returned to New Orleans with the *Hartford* in anything but a happy frame of mind.

On the 28th of June, Farragut had written to General Halleck that he had passed the batteries at Vicksburg with the greater part of his fleet, but that the force which General Butler had given him, under Brigadier-General Williams, was too small to attempt to land on the Vicksburg side. He said: "My orders, General, are to clear the river. This I find impossible without your assistance. Can you aid me in this matter to carry out the peremptory order of the President?"

At that time Halleck was lying idle with the grand Army of the West at Corinth. On July 3d, he wrote to Farragut:

The scattered and weakened condition of my forces renders it impossible for me at the present moment to detach any force to co-operate with yours at Vicksburg. Probably I shall be able to do so when I can get my troops more concentrated. This may delay the clearing of the river, but its accomplishment will be sure in a few weeks. Allow me to congratulate you on your great success.

In response to a telegram of inquiry from Stanton, on July 14th, General Halleck replied on the 15th:

I cannot at present give Commodore Farragut any aid against Vicksburg. I am sending reinforcements to General Curtis in Arkansas and to General Buell in Tennessee and Kentucky.

In commenting upon the fatal short-sightedness of Halleck in failing to grasp the situation at this juncture, General Grant, in his *Memoirs*, page 382, says:

New Orleans and Baton Rouge had fallen into the possession of the national forces [he might also truthfully have added Natchez] so that now the Confederates at the West were narrowed down for all communication with Richmond to the single line of road running east from Vicksburg. To dispossess them of this, therefore, became a matter of first importance. The possession of the Mississippi by us from Memphis to Baton Rouge was also a most important object. It would be equal to the amputation of a limb in its weakening effect upon the enemy.

General Grant then goes on to show that Halleck had a movable force of eighty thousand men, beside enough to hold the territory acquired after the capture of Corinth.

The present writer bases his opinion upon personal observation in confidently asserting that one half of

this force, acting in co-operation with Farragut's fleet, at that time would have absolutely ensured the capture of Vicksburg in July, 1862, and this could have been accomplished in all probability with very slight loss of life. Yet Halleck in the West, like McClellan in the East, hesitated to advance, and the result was the enormous expenditure of life, time, and money that marked the year that intervened from July, 1862, to July, 1863, when Grant finally captured Vicksburg.

During the following winter the Confederates had strongly fortified Port Hudson on the river; and on March 14, 1863, Farragut, in an effort to aid General Banks in his siege of that place, attempted to run by these batteries at night. His force was the *Hartford*, *Mississippi*, *Richmond*, and *Monongahela*, each with a gunboat lashed on the port side. Thus, if the larger ship should be disabled, the gunboat could take her out of the fight. The Confederates had large bonfires on shore, which they lighted when the fleet came within range, and they were thus enabled to keep up a very destructive and effective fire. The *Mississippi*, with Lieutenant George Dewey as executive officer, ran aground and was burned, the *Richmond* received a shot in her steam-chest which rendered her helpless, and she dropped down-stream, and only the *Hartford*, with her attendant steamer *Albatross*, succeeded in passing the batteries.

The flagship as she passed the bend of the river was caught by the strong current, and was nearly carried ashore under the guns of the battery. By the aid of the *Albatross*, however, the *Hartford* was backed clear, and, heading up-stream, passed out of the line of fire with the loss of only one killed and two wounded.

Not dismayed by this repulse of the greater part of

his fleet, Farragut communicated with General Banks and proceeding up to Grand Gulf, where he was fired on by the Confederate battery and had two killed and six wounded, he reached Vicksburg on March 20th, where Colonel Charles R. Ellet joined him on March 25th with the ram *Switzerland*. The three vessels returned to Port Hudson on April 6th, and from that point Farragut sent his secretary, Mr. Gabaudan, down the river, on the night of April 7th, in a canoe covered with branches, to communicate with the fleet.

After capturing a Confederate steamer, Farragut returned to New Orleans, Port Hudson having, meanwhile, surrendered to General Banks, and as the river was now open to navigation its entire length, the Admiral asked the Department for a brief leave of absence, and in July returned in the *Hartford* to New York, where he was received with brilliant public receptions by the authorities of New York and other cities and by their citizens generally.

After a needed rest of five months, Farragut returned to the Gulf in January, 1864, in the *Hartford*, which had meanwhile been thoroughly refitted and prepared for the attack upon Mobile. Since the capture of New Orleans the Confederates had been earnestly engaged in strengthening the defences that commanded the entrance to Mobile Bay, where they seemed confident the next attack would be made. Early in 1863, Admiral Franklin Buchanan, who commanded the *Merrimac* on the first day of her attack upon our fleet at Hampton Roads, was ordered to the command of the naval forces at Mobile. During the spring of 1863, five gunboats were laid down under the supervision of Commander Ebenezer Farrand at Selma, Alabama, then the principal naval station in the Confederacy, and the following

winter the formidable ironclad ram *Tennessee* was built at the same yard.

These preparations all pointed to one end, a concentrated attempt to break the blockade of Mobile Bay, which was being maintained with great vigilance by the Union fleet.

On January 18th, Farragut resumed command of the West Gulf Squadron, then blockading Mobile Bay, with Captain Thornton A. Jenkins, as senior officer, in command of the *Richmond*. On the twentieth, the Admiral, in the *Octorara*, having Lieutenant-Commander Lowe, with the *Itasca*, in company, made a careful reconnoissance of the bay and thoroughly satisfied himself that it would not be prudent to make an attack without the assistance of ironclad vessels. He at once wrote to the Government asking for "one of the many ironclads that are at Charleston and in the Mississippi," and also, in view of his previous experience at Vicksburg, requesting that a few thousand troops might be placed under his orders.

The Confederate defences of the bay were Fort Morgan at the eastern side of the entrance, an old-fashioned brick casemated work, mounting, in three tiers, seven 10-inch Columbiads, three 8-inch, and twenty-two smooth-bore 32-pounders, and two 8-inch, two 6.5-inch, and four 5.82-inch rifled guns. The outside batteries mounted four 10-inch Columbiads, one 8-inch, and two 32-pounder rifled guns. This fort was defended by Brigadier-General Richard L. Page, with 640 men.

On the western side, on Dauphin Island, three miles northwest of Fort Morgan, was Fort Gaines, commanded by Colonel Charles D. Anderson with 860 men. This was a brick work, the walls four feet eight inches thick, mounting three 10-inch Columbiads, four 32-pounder

rifles, and twenty smooth-bore guns of 32-, 34-, and 18-pound calibre. Fort Powell, commanding the principal entrance to the Mississippi Sound, mounted one 10-inch and one 8-inch Columbiad, and four rifled guns. From Fort Gaines to the edge of the ship channel, a double row of piles had been driven, just awash at low water, which effectually prevented light-draught steamers from entering the bay. The piles were also protected by a line of torpedoes. At the point where the piles terminated a red buoy was placed, and the blockade-runners entered by the narrow channel between the buoy and Fort Morgan. Inside of these defences lay the formidable ironclad *Tennessee* and three wooden gunboats, the *Morgan*, *Gaines*, and *Selma*.

For seven weary months Farragut was kept waiting for the armored ships he so sorely needed, anticipating at any moment that Buchanan might come out with the ironclad *Tennessee* and attack his wooden ships, as he had done so successfully with the *Merrimac* at Hampton Roads. At length, in the latter part of July, four monitors were sent to his squadron, the *Tecumseh*, *Winnebago*, *Manhattan*, and *Chickasaw*, and General Canby also promised the assistance of a co-operative land force under General Granger.

By this increase the fleet numbered twenty-one wooden vessels and four ironclads, and Farragut now issued carefully prepared orders for entering the bay. As at Port Hudson, he determined to take in his fleet in pairs, the heavier ships on the starboard, and the smaller vessels on the port side. The order was: the *Brooklyn*, Captain James Alden, leading, with the *Octorara*, Lieutenant-Commander Charles H. Greene; *Hartford*, flagship, Captain Percival Drayton, with the double-ender *Metacomet*, Lieutenant-Commander James

Jouett; *Richmond*, Captain Thornton A. Jenkins, with the *Port Royal*, Lieutenant-Commander Bancroft Gheradi; *Lackawanna*, Captain John B. Marchand, with the *Seminole*, Commander Edward Donaldson; *Monongahela*, Commander James H. Strong, with the *Kennebec*, Lieutenant-Commander McCann; *Ossipee*, Commander W. E. Le Roy, with the *Itasca*, Lieutenant-Commander George Brown; *Oneida*, Commander J. R. M. Mullany, with the *Galena*, Lieutenant-Commander Clark H. Wells. The four monitors were to go in single file a little ahead of the wooden ships, as follows: *Tecumseh*, Commander Tunis A. McCraven; *Manhattan*, Commander J. W. A. Nicholson; *Winnebago*, Commander Thomas H. Stevens; and *Chickasaw*, Lieutenant-Commander George H. Perkins. The last-named officer was on his way home on leave, but volunteering his services was given this important command at his earnest request.

As in the attack upon the forts at New Orleans, every precaution was taken to ensure success, and Farragut issued carefully prepared orders to his commanders, covering every contingency. Having fixed the 5th of August as the day for making the attack, the Admiral gathered his commanders on board the tender *Cowslip*, on the afternoon of August 4th, and ran close into the entrance of the bay for a final reconnoissance.

Everything was quiet, but the forts and gunboats were in evident readiness for the attack they were very sure was impending. A transport came steaming down from the upper bay loaded with troops while the Admiral was making his inspection, and the *Winnebago* was signalled to drive her off. Commander Stevens at once ran in within range of Fort Gaines, and, opening fire, the transport retreated up the bay. After

completing his inspection, Farragut gave his final instructions to his captains and returned to the *Hartford.*

Just before daylight, on August 5, 1864, the Admiral sent for his steward and asked how the weather was. Learning that there was a fresh westerly breeze which would take the smoke from the ships over Fort Morgan, he said, "Then we will go in this morning." The order was issued, hammocks were piped up and stowed, and the men went to breakfast at five o'clock, all the other ships of the fleet following the same routine. At 5.30, the Admiral said to his Fleet Captain, "Well, Drayton, we might as well get under way." The signal was at once made, and by 6.30 the fleet had weighed anchors, were standing in across the bar, and had entered the channel, each ship with flags displayed at the peak and masthead, and the crew at quarters. The Confederate vessels at once steamed out and took up positions in single line, *échelon*, across the channel, with their port batteries bearing to rake the advancing fleet. The *Tennessee* was a little westward of the red buoy and close to the inner line of torpedoes.

Farragut had ordered six light steamers and gunboats, the *Genesee, Pinola, Pembina, Sebago, Tennessee,* and *Bienville*, all under command of Lieutenant-Commander Edward C. Grafton, to take position southeast of Fort Morgan and keep up a flank fire, but, unfortunately, they were unable to get near enough to do any serious damage to the enemy.

Edgar Stanton Maclay, in his *History of the United States Navy*, pp. 411, 412, graphically describes the scene on board the *Hartford* at this stage of the action:

As the noble *Hartford* drew near to undergo her part in the battle she seemed to nerve herself for the terrible or-

deal. An almost unbroken silence pervaded her decks, disturbed only by the lapping of the waves against her dark hull as she passed up the channel, and the musical calls of the leadsmen in the chains: "By the mark three!" or "A quarter less four!" As the men stood at their guns, in momentary expectation of the order to fire or of being cut down by the enemy's shot, they instinctively cast inquiring glances at the determined faces of their officers. Serious thoughts were passing through their minds, and many faces bore an anxious expression. The good and bad deeds of their lives came before them in swift review, for they realized that at the next moment they might be standing before their Maker. Yet there were no signs of flinching. They had been looking forward to this fight for months. They had speculated on its chances and counted its costs, and were now, with minds made up, with set faces and with tense nerves, deliberately advancing to the great struggle. In the cockpit were Surgeon Lansdale and Assistant-Surgeon Commons and their aids, with their instruments spread out for the first victim. As their bloody task had not yet begun, they held their watches in their hands, to time the different periods of the battle. To them, ignorant of everything going on above, each minute seemed an hour.

At the wheel, under the break of the poop-deck, snugly barricaded up to their chins with canvas, were the veteran seamen McFarland, Wood, and Jassin, who had been in every engagement of the ship, and on their coolness in a great measure depended its safety. Grasping the spokes of the wheel with a determined clutch, they had ears alone for the captain. On the quarter-deck was the commanding figure of Captain Drayton, surrounded by his staff officers, Lieutenant J. C. Watson, Lieutenant Arthur Reid Yates, whose duty was to keep a watch on Farragut and convey his orders to all parts of the ship, Secretary McKinley, who was busily engaged in taking notes of the battle, and Acting Ensign Henry Howard Brownell. Close to them was the Signal-Quartermaster Knowles, who had

hoisted more than one signal that led to victory. Farragut himself had taken a position in the port main-shrouds on the upper sheer ratline, twenty-five feet up, so as to command a better view of the battle and at the same time be within easy speaking distance of Commander Jouett, who had stationed himself on the wheel-house of the *Metacomet*. Above Farragut in the top was Martin Freeman, the pilot, within easy reach of the Admiral.

There they stood—the boy graduate from the academy beside the weather-beaten tar who had seen service in all quarters of the globe; the youthful marine officer beside the scarred veteran of a dozen actions, each placing implicit confidence in the other, for they well knew that a master mind was guiding them. Truly, "the morale of the ship was superb!"

At 6.47 the first gun was fired by the monitor *Tecumseh*, the shell bursting above Fort Morgan, but no reply was made, and the fleet steamed on, the flagship signalling "Closer order," which was promptly obeyed, each ship closing up to the one ahead and a little on the starboard quarter, so that such ships as had bow guns could bring them to bear.

At 7.05 the Confederates opened, and their shot began to fall among the ships. At 7.10 the *Brooklyn* opened with her bow-chasers, and within five minutes the other ships began firing. Meanwhile, the Confederate vessels stood out to the centre of the channel, just above the line of obstructions, from which point they could rake the approaching fleet. The *Hartford* was struck several times, and but for her splinter nettings would have suffered severely by the splinters which were torn from her fore- and mainmasts and upper works. By 7.30 the flagship was abreast of the fort and fairly engaged. At this time a shell struck her

UNITED STATES SHIP "HARTFORD" STRIPPED FOR BATTLE
From a photograph taken in Mobile Bay in August, 1864
(Courtesy of Rear Adimral N. Mayo Dyer, U. S. N., Retired)

companion, the *Metacomet*, taking off the head of a seaman, and, bursting in the yeoman's storeroom, set fire to the oil and paint which were kept there.

Meantime, the *Tecumseh*, being well up with the fort and drawing slowly by the *Tennessee* on her port beam, was suddenly seen to reel to port, a dull, muffled roar was heard, the water lifted by the side of the monitor, her bow plunged and her stern rose in the air, showing the screws racing, and with a plunge the *Tecumseh* went to the bottom!

As the ship sank, Captain Craven and the pilot met at the manhole which gave an exit from the pilot-house to the turret, and so outboard. But one could pass. Craven, as the pilot testified, drew back with the words, "After you, pilot." The pilot escaped, but as he reached the last rung of the ladder to the turret, the vessel, as he said, "seemed to drop from under me," and Craven went down with ninety-three of his 141 officers and men at about 7.45 o'clock!

At this critical moment of the fight the *Brooklyn* slowed down, signalling, "The monitors are right ahead; we cannot go on without passing them." Farragut signalled, "Order the monitors ahead, and go on," but the *Brooklyn* had stopped her engines and was swinging across the channel. The *Hartford*, to avoid a collision, was thus compelled to back, and she, also, drifted across the channel. Meanwhile the Confederate fire was concentrated upon the two leading ships, and the loss of life was becoming appalling. The *Brooklyn* was struck thirty times; on board the *Hartford* one man had both legs carried away, and as he threw up his hands in agony another shot took off both his arms, yet, strange to say, he survived his injuries. A shell, passing through the bulwarks, killed all the men stationed on

one side of a gun, and at the same time a shot came through the bow and took off the head of a man serving one of the forward guns. Another man was killed as he was coming up the ladder from the berth-deck, and as his body fell it knocked Wilson Brown, a seaman stationed at the shell-whip, into the hold, where he lay for a time senseless. At this time Fort Morgan was firing eight shots a minute, while the Confederate gunboats were also pouring in a raking fire.

"What is the matter with the *Brooklyn?*" said the Admiral to his pilot. "She must have plenty of water there." "Plenty, and to spare, Admiral," replied the pilot. "What is the trouble?" was shouted through a trumpet from the forecastle of the *Hartford* to the *Brooklyn*. "Torpedoes," was the answer. "Tell the Admiral there is a heavy line of torpedoes ahead!" Then came the tempestuous response that has passed into history: "Damn the torpedoes!" cried Farragut from his post in the main-rigging. "Four bells! Captain Drayton, go ahead! Jouett, back full speed!" The *Metacomet* then backed until the *Hartford* was twisted clear of the *Brooklyn*, when the flagship and her companion went ahead, and, passing the *Brooklyn*, the *Hartford* assumed the head of the line and led the fleet to a glorious victory!

In performing this evolution it was impossible for the *Hartford* to pass the *Brooklyn* without going to the west of the red buoy marking the line of the torpedoes which had but a few moments before sunk the *Tecumseh*. Nothing but the absolute necessity of extricating his fleet from the state of confusion into which it had for a moment fallen would have warranted this daring action, and as the noble ship moved across the line the grating of the submerged torpedoes against her hull

could be heard by the men stationed below in the magazine. But fortunately none of these torpedoes exploded, and the danger-line was soon passed.

The coolness and daring exhibited by Farragut at this juncture of the battle elicited the hearty admiration of his enemies. General Page, who was in command at Fort Morgan, said afterward, in commenting upon this incident: "Farragut's coolness and quick perception saved the Union fleet from a great disaster, and probably from destruction." A Confederate officer, stationed in one of the water batteries, says:

> The manœuvring of the vessels at this critical juncture was a magnificent sight. At first the ships appeared to be in inextricable confusion and at the mercy of our guns. But when the *Hartford* dashed forward we realized that a grand tactical movement had been accomplished.

Having kept so far to the west of the red buoy, the *Hartford* passed within two hundred yards of the *Tennessee*, which was waiting to ram the flagship, Commodore Buchanan hoping to sink the leading ship under the guns of the fort, and thus block the passage of the fleet. Lieutenant Wharton of the *Tennessee* says:

> I took the lockstring from the captain of the forward 7-inch rifle gun loaded with a percussion shell, myself, took a long, deliberate aim, and gave the command: "Raise!" "Steady!" "Raise!" "Little more!" "Ready!" "Fire!" I was as confident that our shell would tear a hole in the *Hartford's* side big enough to sink her in a few minutes as I was that I had fired it. It did tear the hole I expected, but it was above the water-line. I have often speculated since upon the effect of not having raised the breach of our bow gun, and thus caused that shell to ricochet before striking the *Hartford*. I wish I had let the captain of the gun fire the piece himself.

After firing this shot the *Tennessee* endeavored to ram the *Hartford*, but Farragut avoided the blow and continued up-channel. Buchanan then made for the *Brooklyn's* starboard bow, but she also sheered and thus escaped the blow, although she received a broadside from the *Tennessee* which did her great damage. The *Monongahela* now ran for the Confederate ship, but only struck her a glancing blow which tore off her own bronze beak, while the ram fired into the *Kennebec*, one shell starting a fire, while a second mortally wounded the first lieutenant of the *Monongahela*. The *Tennessee* then attacked the *Ossipee*, and disabled the *Oneida*, severely wounding Captain Mullany; but the monitor *Winnebago*, Commander Stevens, who had lately commanded the *Oneida*, came up, and, gallantly intervening, took the Confederate ship's fire amid a thunder of cheers from the crew of the *Oneida* for their old commander. The *Winnebago* fired four solid shot into the ram, upon which the *Tennesseee* sullenly retired under the guns of Fort Morgan, and the first stage of the battle was over, with the Union fleet in the rear of the forts, past the obstructing line of torpedoes, and fairly inside Mobile Bay.

The *Hartford* was, meanwhile, receiving a galling fire from the Confederate gunboats *Selma*, *Morgan*, and *Gaines*, that kept nearly a thousand yards dead ahead of the flagship, plying her meanwhile with their stern guns. One shot from the *Selma* killed ten men and wounded five at the guns of the forward division. At 8.02 Farragut signalled, "Gunboats chase enemy's gunboats." Commander Jouett at once cut the *Metacomet* adrift from the *Hartford*, and, being the fastest of the Union gunboats, he speedily outran the *Port Royal*, *Itasca*, and *Kennebec*, and getting within range of the

Gaines, he gave her a broadside, but a heavy rain coming on, accompanied by fog, the Confederate gunboat escaped under the guns of Fort Morgan. The *Metacomet* then went in chase of the *Selma*, that was making for Mobile, but, having no pilot, Jouett soon found himself in shoal water with a strong chance of running his ship ashore. However, after a running fight, he finally overhauled his chase, and at 9.10 the *Selma* surrendered, having seven men and one officer killed and her commander wounded. Acting Master N. Mayo Dyer was sent on board the Confederate steamer to receive her surrender and he hoisted the American flag over the captured vessel.

With the dispersion of the gunboats, Farragut brought his fleet to anchor about four miles above Fort Morgan, and the crews of the ships were clearing up decks as best they could and preparing for breakfast, when, at 8.50, slowly creeping up the channel, with a volume of black smoke pouring out of her smokestack, the *Tennessee* was seen coming up to renew her contest with the fleet, while the parapets of Forts Morgan, Gaines, and Powell were crowded with Confederates eagerly watching for the result of this final issue of combat. It was unquestionably a most daring attempt to face, alone and unaided, three monitors and fourteen wooden ships, for at best it could be but a forlorn hope.

Signal was at once made by Farragut for the fleet to slip and get under way, and he added, "Attack the ram not only with your guns, but bows at full speed." The ships all had steam, and they were at once in motion. The *Monongahela* came first, and at full speed struck the *Tennessee* fair amidships, on the starboard side, where the casemate joined the deck. The shock was tremendous, many men on both ships being thrown

from their feet, but beyond causing a slight leak no damage was done to the ram by a blow that, thus fairly delivered, would have sunk any wooden vessel in Farragut's fleet. Although the *Tennessee* was uninjured, the *Monongahela* did not escape so well, for her iron prow was wrenched off and the butt ends of her bow planks were badly shattered, while two shells from the ram exploded on her berth-deck, wounding an officer and two men. As the *Monongahela* swung around she fired her starboard battery at a distance of ten yards, the shot glancing harmlessly off the iron sides of the *Tennessee*.

The *Lackawanna* closely followed, striking a full blow on the port side of the ram at the after-end of the casemate, which caused her to heel over heavily. As she swung round the two vessels lay bow and stern, side by side, and the marines poured a sharp fire of musketry into the *Tennessee's* ports, while a shot from the *Lackawanna's* gun smashed one of the ram's port shutters and drove the fragments within the shield. Admiral Buchanan fired two shots through his adversary and headed immediately for the *Hartford*.

The two flagships were now coming toward each other, head on, but just before the contact the *Tennessee* yawed a little, so that the *Hartford's* port bow scraped against the port beam of the ram, the *Hartford's* anchor catching between the two vessels and being bent out of shape. The flagship poured in her broadside of solid shot at a distance of ten feet, but they glanced off the angling roof of the ram without penetrating. One of the *Tennessee's* shells, however, entered the *Hartford's* berth-deck, killing an officer and four men, and wounding eight. This was the last shot the Confederate ship fired in the action.

Captain Drayton Rear Admiral Farragut

REAR ADMIRAL D. G. FARRAGUT AND FLAG-CAPTAIN PERCIVAL DRAYTON ON THE QUARTER DECK OF THE "HARTFORD"

From a photograph taken in Mobile Bay in 1864

(Courtesy of Rear Admiral N. Mayo Dyer, U. S. N., Retired)

The *Lackawanna* now came up for another blow at the ram, but, unfortunately, struck the flagship just forward of the mizzenmast, narrowly missing the Admiral. The blow crushed in the side of the *Hartford*, cutting her down within two feet of the water-line, knocking two ports into one, and upsetting a Dahlgren gun.

This onset of a friend was too much for the equanimity of Farragut. "Can you say 'For God's sake' by signal?" inquired the Admiral of the signal officer. "Yes, sir," was the reply. "Then say to the *Lackawanna*, 'For God's sake get out of the way and anchor!'"

But the three monitors were now coming up to take their part in the conflict, and just as the *Hartford* swung clear of the *Tennessee*, the *Manhattan* drew up on the port side of the ram and delivered one of her tremendous 15-inch shots, point-blank. This huge projectile was the first shot that had yet penetrated the armor of the *Tennessee*. The *Chickasaw* now passed the ram on her port side, firing her battery, and, running under her stern, held that position, much of the time in actual contact, until the very end of the fight. Lieutenant-Commander Perkins planted fifty-two solid 11-inch shot on the after-end of the *Tennessee's* casemate, close under her stern, starting many of her plates, jamming her port shutters, damaging the cover of her stern-post, and carrying away her tiller chains, while one shot entered a port, killing one man, and fracturing Admiral Buchanan's leg.

The *Tennessee* bore this terrible hammering, without being able to fire a gun, for nearly an hour, when, sore beset, and finding that further resistance was hopeless, Captain Johnston, being authorized by Admiral Buchanan to surrender, exhibited a white flag from the

casemate of the ram at ten o'clock, and the firing ceased. A boat was then sent from the *Ossipee* by Captain Le Roy, who received Captain Johnston's surrender, and the *Chickasaw* took the disabled *Tennessee* in tow and anchored her near the *Hartford*.

During the three hours that this desperate contest lasted, from the time the fleet first came under fire, the *Hartford* was struck twenty times, and had 25 killed and 28 wounded; the *Brooklyn* had 11 killed and 43 wounded; *Lackawanna*, 4 killed and 35 wounded; *Oneida*, 8 killed and 30 wounded; *Monongahela*, 6 wounded; *Metacomet*, 1 killed and 2 wounded; *Ossipee*, 1 killed and 7 wounded; *Richmond*, 2 wounded; *Galena*, 1 wounded; *Octorara*, 1 killed and 10 wounded; *Kennebec*, 1 killed and 6 wounded; *Tecumseh*, 93 drowned. Total, 145 killed and drowned, 170 wounded. The total Confederate loss was 12 killed, 20 wounded, and 280 prisoners taken. It was a severe price that Farragut had been compelled to pay for his glorious victory,—"the most desperate battle I ever fought since the days of the old *Essex*," as he said to a friend.

At 2.30 that afternoon, Lieutenant-Commander Perkins got under way in the *Chickasaw* and bombarded Fort Powell, and the following night that work was abandoned by the Confederates. On August 6th, the *Chickasaw* opened fire on Fort Gaines, which surrendered on the following morning, and on the twenty-second of the month the fleet, including the captured *Tennessee*, and assisted by General Granger, with a siege-train sent from New Orleans, opened fire on Fort Morgan, and in twelve hours threw three thousand shot and shell into and around the works. The next day it surrendered, and Farragut had thus successfully accom-

VIEW OF FORT MORGAN, TAKEN SEPT. 23, 1864, AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT IN AUGUST, 1864

plished the crowning work of his long and brilliant career.

In November, 1864, Farragut's health having failed, he was ordered home in the *Hartford*. Upon his arrival in New York he was received with great public honors, and a purse of $50,000 was presented to him for the purchase of a home in the city. December 22d, a bill creating the grade of Vice-Admiral passed both Houses of Congress, was signed by the President on the 23d, and the nomination was immediately confirmed by the Senate. On July 25, 1866, Congress passed a law creating the grade of Admiral, which had never before existed in our navy, and Farragut was at once nominated to the office.

In 1867, Farragut hoisted his broad pennant on the *Franklin*, and made a memorable cruise in European waters, being received everywhere with the most distinguished honors. At the island of Minorca, the home of his ancestors, the entire population turned out to welcome him. In 1869, with Mrs. Farragut, the Admiral visited California, and his last official duty was to receive the remains of George Peabody, at Portland, Me., in January, 1870. The following summer he died at Portsmouth, N. H., receiving an imposing public funeral in New York.

At the close of the Civil War, the *Hartford* was the flagship of Acting Rear-Admiral H. H. Bell, on the Asiatic station, from 1866 to 1868, under command of Commander Robert W. Shufeldt, until February, 1867, when he was relieved by Commander George E. Belknap. In June, 1867, the *Hartford* and *Wyoming* sailed for Formosa, in consequence of the murder of the crew of the American bark *Rover*, which had been wrecked on that island. Unable to obtain reparation for this

offence, on June 13th Rear-Admiral Bell landed a force of 181 men, under command of Commander Belknap, who drove the savages from their village and burned their huts. In this affair Lieut.-Commander A. S. Mackenzie was shot dead by the natives. On January 11, 1868, Commodore Bell was drowned by his boat capsizing as he was endeavoring to enter Osaka River, Japan. The *Hartford* returned to New York in August, 1868, and went out of commission at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

For several years the *Hartford* remained in ordinary at the New York Navy Yard, and was sent in 1872 to the East Indies, under command of Commanders Calhoun and J. C. P. De Krafft. Returning home, she was on the North Atlantic Station, in command of Captain Stephen B. Luce, 1876–77, and was the flagship of the South Atlantic squadron, under Lieut.-Commander P. F. Harrington. In 1880, the *Hartford* went out of commission at Boston, and from 1883 to 1886 she was the flagship of the Pacific squadron in command, in turn, of Captains Charles C. Carpenter, George H. Perkins, and Edward P. Lull, under the flag of Rear-Admiral J. McCauley. The old ship remained in the Pacific for nearly ten years, the latter part of the time at Mare Island, where she was entirely rebuilt at a cost of $600,000, and fitted as a training-ship for landsmen. She returned to the United States in 1899, under command of Commander John M. Hawley, and during the summer cruise of 1901 the *Hartford* touched at the principal ports of Northern Europe.

At Leith, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Cronstadt, Antwerp, and other ports, the former flagship of the famous Farragut was visited by thousands of interested guests, including the Crown Prince of Denmark, and other

distinguished personages. Everywhere the ship was received with the utmost courtesy, and her visits were made the occasion of a series of feasts and festivals.

The *Hartford* is still (1902) doing excellent service as a training-ship, under command of Commander William H. Reeder, U. S. N.

CHAPTER XV

THE "MONITOR"

THE first practical application of iron-plating to war vessels, as a protection against shot, was made, in 1842, by Robert Livingston Stevens. In 1814, Edwin Stevens, under the direction of his father, the distinguished engineer, Robert L. Stevens, had experimented with shot against inclined iron-plating. In 1841, on account of the United States boundary disputes with England, public attention in this country was strongly directed to naval defences, and Edwin and his brother, Robert L. Stevens, made a series of experiments at Sandy Hook before a commission of officers of the army, appointed by President Tyler. After several trials against iron targets, this board reported that iron four and a half inches thick effectually resisted the impact of a 64-pound shot fired with a battering charge at thirty yards.

As a result of this report, an Act of Congress was passed April 14, 1842, authorizing the Secretary of the Navy to contract with Robert L. Stevens for an ironclad steam vessel, and he at once began the excavation of a dry dock at Hoboken, and within a year had his battery planned and had begun its construction. This was eleven years before the small ironclad vessels, built

by the French government, were used at Kinburn in 1854.

But within a year after the Stevens contract was signed, Commodore Robert F. Stockton constructed a ten-inch wrought-iron gun throwing a solid shot that pierced a four-and-a-half-inch target, and it became necessary to increase the thickness of the proposed armor of the battery. And so, as the power of the gun was increased, the plans of Mr. Stevens from time to time needed revision, and the battery was never launched. As a matter of fact, the contest between artillery and armor, then begun, has not yet ceased.

September 26, 1854, John Ericsson, a Swedish engineer, who had lived in the United States since 1839, sent to the Emperor Napoleon a letter through the Swedish Consul at New York and the Swedish Minister in Paris, suggesting a new system of naval attack which embodied the main features of the future *Monitor*. This letter was courteously acknowledged, but the Emperor did not think "the result to be obtained would be proportionate to the expense or to the small number of guns that could be brought into use."

In July, 1861, Ericsson sent Mr. Delamater on to Washington with the plans and description of his proposed vessel, with a desire, as he says, "of serving the Union cause by constructing vessels capable of defeating the *Merrimac* and other Confederate ironclad vessels." In his report, dated July 4, 1861, Secretary Welles recommended the appointment of a proper and competent board to inquire into and report in regard to the construction of one or more ironclad steamers or floating batteries.

Mr. Stephen R. Mallory, the Confederate Secretary of the Navy, who had been Chairman of the Naval

Committee during his ten years in Congress, was much more prompt to recognize the changed conditions in naval warfare, as shown by the action of the French, English, and Italian governments in their construction of armor-plated steam frigates. Sir John Hay had already declared in Parliament: "The man who goes into action in a wooden vessel is a fool, and the man who sends him there is a villain." May 8, 1861, two months before Mr. Welles suggested the appointment of a board of officers to report upon the advisability of constructing one or more ironclad steamers, Mr. Mallory, with great foresight and unusual tactical insight, wrote to the Confederate Naval Committee, saying:

> I regard the possession of an iron-armored ship as a matter of the first necessity. Such a vessel at this time could traverse the entire coast of the United States, prevent all blockade, and encounter, with a fair prospect of success, their entire navy. . . . Should the Committee deem it expedient to begin at once the construction of such a ship not a moment should be lost. Inequality of numbers may be compensated by invulnerability. Not only does economy, but naval success, dictate the wisdom and expediency of fighting with iron against wood, without regard to first cost.

On July 11, 1861, without waiting for an appropriation, Mr. Mallory approved the plans submitted to him for raising and altering the *Merrimac*, and the work of construction was at once pushed on. If the needed material had been at hand and the means for preparing it for use had been in the slightest degree commensurate with the energy displayed by the Confederate authorities, the *Merrimac* would have destroyed the United States fleet at Newport News, and very possibly have

made her appearance before Washington a month before the *Monitor* was in the water.

On August 8th, Commodores Joseph Smith and Hiram Paulding and Captain Charles H. Davis were appointed a board to examine plans for ironclad vessels, and Congress appropriated $1,500,000 to build armored vessels, for which proposals were at once invited.

Twenty-one days later Ericsson submitted to President Lincoln plans for an ironclad vessel that he declared could be built in ten weeks, and be "ready to take up position under the rebel guns at Norfolk, and so efficient, too, I trust, that within a few hours the stolen ships [from the Norfolk Navy Yard] would be sunk, and the harbor purged of traitors."

September 16, 1861, the naval board reported, acknowledging their lack of "experience and scant knowledge in this branch of naval architecture," but they added, "For river and harbor service we consider ironclad vessels of light draught, or floating batteries thus shielded, as very important." The three vessels recommended for adoption, among hundreds of plans presented, were the Ericsson floating battery, a broadside vessel of 3296 tons, afterward known as the *New Ironsides*, and the *Galena*.

The remarks of the board upon the *Monitor* in the report are:

J. Ericsson, New York.—This plan of a floating battery is novel, but seems to be based upon a plan which will render the battery shot- and shell-proof. It is to be apprehended that her properties for sea are not such as a sea-going vessel should possess. But she may be moved from one place to another on the coast in smooth water. We recommend that an experiment be made with one

battery of this description on the terms proposed, with a guarantee and forfeiture in case of failure in any of the properties and points of the vessel as proposed. Price, $275,000; length of vessel, 174 feet; breadth of beam, 41 feet; depth of hold, 11½ feet; time, 100 days; draught of water, 10 feet; displacement, 1245 tons; speed per hour, 9 statute miles.

While the formal contract for the construction of the *Monitor* was being drawn up, the iron that formed the keel-plate of the vessel was drawn through the rolling-mill, and on October 25, 1861, the keel of the *Monitor* was laid in the shipyard of Thomas F. Rowland, Continental Iron Works, Greenpoint, L. I. So rapidly was the work carried forward that she was launched on January 30, 1862; she went on her first trial trip February 19th, and was put into commission, under command of Lieutenant John L. Worden, U.S.N., February 25, 1862. On the second trial her steering-gear was adjusted, and on March 4th the *Monitor* made another trial, using her guns, and the board of naval officers reported favorably upon her performance.

The total contract price for the vessel was $275,000. This was to be paid in six installments, the last payment being made but four days before the contest in Hampton Roads, while the amount reserved, $68,750, was not paid until March 14, 1862, nearly a week after the *Monitor* had been tested in one of the most remarkable engagements in the naval annals of this country.

The hull of the *Monitor* was formed by two distinct parts, a lower and upper, both flat-bottomed; the lower one built of ⅝-inch iron, 124 feet long, 34 feet wide at the top, and 6½ feet deep. The sides inclined at an angle of about 51° with a vertical line, and terminated in sharp ends, the bow projecting and coming to a point

at an angle of 80°. The upper hull was 174 feet long, 41 feet 4 inches wide, with perpendicular sides 5 feet high. It jutted over the lower hull on each side 3 feet 7 inches, and at each end 25 feet. The sides of this portion were of white oak, 2½ feet thick, covered with 6 inches of iron plates on the outside and a ½-inch plating of iron within to arrest splinters in case of a ball penetrating the sides. The top was covered with a bomb-proof flat deck, unprotected by any railing or bulwark. This deck consisted of oak beams, 10 inches square and 26 inches apart, covered with 8-inch plank, and this with two layers of iron each one inch thick. Her draught being ten feet, left only eighteen inches above the surface. The projecting ends of the upper hull served as a cover for the propeller and rudder, and for the anchor. Thus the propeller and steering-gear were entirely out of reach of shot, while the anchor could be raised or lowered without exposing the crew to observation or to fire from the enemy, and a shot would have to pass through twenty-five feet of water to penetrate the lower hull.

In the middle of the hull the turret was placed, a cylinder of twenty feet diameter within and nine feet high, built of eight thicknesses of one-inch plates, bolted together with overlapping joints, and lined with an additional layer of 1-inch iron, making nine inches in all. The weight of the turret was one hundred tons, and it was supported in a circular bed of composition metal firmly secured to the deck. In time of action the weight of the turret was taken by a vertical central shaft of iron, with which it was made to revolve by a steam-engine, which was also used for working the furnace-blowers and for ventilation. The top of the turret was covered with iron beams and perforated

iron, shell-proof, which, while it afforded protection, admitted the necessary circulation of air. Small sliding hatchways were provided to afford entrance for the men.

The turret contained two 11-inch smooth-bore Dahlgren guns, placed parallel to each other, and both directed from the same side of the turret. The port-holes were circular openings three feet above the deck, just large enough to admit the muzzle of the guns, kept closed by a sliding shutter, and removed only when the gun was fired. The turret was revolved to the right or left by a small wheel which controlled the steam.

To Captain Fox, Ericsson wrote, when proposing "*Monitor*" as the name of his vessel, that

> it would admonish the insurgents that their batteries on banks of rivers would no longer be barriers to the passage of the Union forces, and that it would prove a severe *monitor* that would suggest to the lords of the British Admiralty the impropriety of completing their four steel-clad ships, then on the stocks, at the cost of three and a half millions each.

Assistant Secretary of the Navy, G. V. Fox, had been from the first an earnest champion of Ericsson, and when the new vessel was nearly ready, he wrote to Ericsson on February 6, 1862, asking: "Can your *Monitor* sail for the Gulf of Mexico by the 12th inst.?" It had been purposed to send her out to the Mississippi, to aid Farragut in his attack upon the forts below New Orleans, but the alarming news of the readiness of the *Merrimac* at Norfolk changed the plan, and Lieutenant Worden was ordered to sail for Hampton Roads without delay.

In the forenoon of March 6, 1862, the *Monitor* left

New York in tow of a tug and accompanied by the steamers *Currituck* and *Sachem*. Before she had passed the Narrows a telegram came from Washington, ordering her to be sent to Washington, and a tug was despatched after the ironclad, but, fortunately, she had got to sea before she could be overtaken. The officers of the *Monitor* were Lieutenant John L. Worden, in command; Lieutenant Samuel Dana Greene, executive officer; Masters, Louis N. Stodder and John J. N. Webber; Assistant Surgeon, Daniel C. Logue; Paymaster, W. F. Keeler; First Assistant Engineer, Isaac Newton; Second Assistant Engineer, Albert B. Campbell; Third Assistant Engineers, R. W. Hands, M. T. Sumstrum. Chief Engineer Alban C. Stimers, naval inspector of ironclads, was on board as a passenger, and there was a crew of forty-three men.

The first day the wind was moderate with a smooth sea; but by the seventh, both wind and sea had increased so that the decks were swept and much water was forced below through the hawse-pipes and under the turret, from which the packing had escaped, while the waves broke over the low smoke-pipe and the blower-pipe. This stopped the blowers, and, the furnaces having insufficient draught, the engine-room was filled with gas, and Chief Engineer Alban C. Stimers and Mr. Isaac Newton were so nearly suffocated that they were taken up to the top of the turret to all appearances lifeless.

The fires under the boilers soon ran down so that the steam-pumps would not work, and the hand-pumps were found to be useless. In this strait bailing was resorted to, but, as the buckets had to be passed through a series of hatchways from the hold to the top of the turret, very little gain was made in freeing the

vessel from the water, which continued to pour below in alarming quantities. Had not the wind gone down toward evening, the *Monitor* would unquestionably have foundered, but fortunately it subsided, and the engines were again got in motion, and with the steam-pumps working, the ship was soon freed from water. That night, however, another danger confronted the crew, in consequence of the wire wheel-ropes coming off the wheel, and all night the *Monitor* was steered by relieving tackles.

Saturday, the eighth, the wind fell, and the vessel ran into smoother water, enabling the tired crew to get the steering-gear in order and to pump the water out of their ship. At four o'clock, as they passed Cape Henry, the booming of heavy guns was distinctly heard; and later, when the pilot came on board, the news of the terrible destruction wrought by the *Merrimac* that day upon the Federal fleet was brought to them.

Lieutenant Worden at once began active preparations for battle; the turret was keyed up, the ship was cleared for action, and by the light of the burning *Congress* the *Monitor* steamed up the bay to the scene of hostilities. By nine o'clock Lieutenant Worden reported to Captain Marston of the *Roanoke*, who had already received orders to send the *Monitor*, upon her arrival, to Washington. But, in view of the great exigency confronting him, Marston decided to disregard those orders, and directed Worden to anchor close to the *Minnesota*, which was still aground, and to be prepared to protect her.

All through that night the already exhausted officers and crew of the *Monitor* were busily engaged in preparation for the coming conflict, and, as they had had no sleep since Friday night, they were certainly not in fit

condition for the terrible ordeal before them when the sun rose on Sunday morning. But when, at eight o'clock, the *Merrimac* was seen to slip her moorings and steam down toward the *Minnesota*, as though to complete the work she had left unfinished the previous night, the crew of the *Monitor* cheerfully responded to the call to quarters and went to their stations in excellent spirits, and confident of victory. Lieutenant Worden took his station in the pilot-house with the pilot, and a quartermaster and Chief Engineer Stimers, with sixteen men, manned the guns in the turret. Acting Master Webber had charge of the powder-division, and the paymaster and captain's clerk passed the orders from the captain in the pilot-house. The remainder of the crew were in the engine-room, magazine, and cockpit.

As the *Merrimac* came within range, heading for the *Minnesota*, Captain Van Brunt opened upon the ironclad with all his broadside guns and the 10-inch pivot-gun; "a broadside," as he said, "which would have blown out of the water any timber-built ship in the world," but it was absolutely ineffectual. In return the *Merrimac* fired one of her terrible 7-inch shells, which went crashing through the *Minnesota* amidships, tearing four rooms into one on the berth-deck, and starting a fire. The *Monitor*, meanwhile, steamed out and challenged the Confederate ram to combat.

F. B. Butts, in *The Monitor and the Merrimac*, in describing this scene, which he witnessed, says:

> It was alike an astonishment to the rebels and our own people; neither had seen her when she arrived, and many were the conjectures of what it could be. Some said a huge water-tank, others an infernal machine; none that she had guns, and not till they saw steam rise from her

decks did they think she had power to move herself. . . . The *Merrimac* stopped her engines, as if to survey and wonder at the audacity of the nondescript. The *Monitor* was approaching on her starboard bow. Then, as if seized with impulsive rage, and as if a huge breath would waft her enemy away, the *Merrimac* poured a broadside of solid shot at her. For an instant she was enveloped in smoke, and people who were looking on held their breath in doubt of seeing the *Monitor* again. It was a moment of great suspense. Then, as a gentle breeze swept over the scene, the *Monitor* appeared. At this instant the flash of her guns was seen, and then their report, louder than any cannon that had ever been heard, thundered across the sea. It seemed to jar the very earth, and the iron scales of the invincible ram crumbled and cracked from their fastenings. One on board the *Merrimac* at this time has told me that, though at first entirely confident of victory, consternation took hold of them all. "D——n it," said one, "the thing is full of guns!" The enthusiasm at this moment among the thousand of civilians and soldiers, who lined the shore to witness the fight, was beyond description and their own control. Such a spontaneous burst of cheers was never before heard.

The *Merrimac* opened fire upon her antagonist with her 7-inch bow rifle, but the shot failed to hit the mark. The *Monitor* then steamed close to her foe and replied with both guns, but the 11-inch 170-pound shot, fired point-blank, glanced off harmlessly from the sloping sides of the *Merrimac*. The Confederate ship replied with her whole starboard battery, and shot after shot struck the *Monitor's* turret as the guns came into bearing, but although the concussion was severe to the men within, no injury was inflicted upon the *Monitor*.

The important result of this first round was the confidence inspired in the crew of the *Monitor* by the

discovery that their turret was invulnerable to the enemy' shot, and that their vessel was handled more readily than their heavier antagonist. This fact was taken advantage of by Lieutenant Worden, who manœuvred his vessel so that at times he obtained positions where he could hit his antagonist with his heavy shot, while the *Merrimac* could not bring a gun to bear. If Worden had been permitted to use the charge of twenty pounds of powder, which later in the war was regularly used in the 11-inch guns, instead of the fifteen pounds to which he was strictly limited, by his instructions, there is no doubt he would have penetrated the armor of the *Merrimac*. It was also unfortunate that he could not use the wrought-iron shot that had been supplied to him, as they had not been properly gauged. The cast-iron shot he fired broke up on impact with the *Merrimac's* plating.

Both vessels now turned, and approaching at close quarters renewed the engagement, the *Merrimac* firing rapidly and the *Monitor* about once in seven or eight minutes. In this second encounter Acting Master Stodder was disabled by the impact of a shot striking the turret while he was incautiously leaning against it.

Great trouble was experienced in working the revolving engine. It was hard to start, and still harder to stop, and as the guns could only be sighted as they were run out, it was with difficulty that a view could be obtained, and they were necessarily fired on the fly. The *Merrimac* kept up a steady musketry fire upon the ports as they revolved toward them, but fortunately none of the *Monitor's* men were injured by this firing.

After much firing with no definite results, Worden determined to use his ram, and, backing off a short distance, he made a dash at the *Merrimac's* stern, hoping

to disable her propeller or her rudder, but he missed it by a couple of feet, and the two ships grazed. At this moment, while the two 11-inch guns were almost in contact with the Confederate's hull they were fired, the two shot striking almost in the same place, crushing in the iron and the wooden backing, but failing to penetrate. The concussion was terrible, knocking several of the *Merrimac's* men down at the after guns and causing some of them to bleed at the nose and ears.

Lieutenant Jones, satisfied that his ship was no match for the *Monitor*, now made for the *Minnesota*, but ran his vessel aground, and for a few minutes she was in great danger; he succeeded, however, in getting her afloat again, and, paying no attention to the rain of shot from the frigate, opened with his bow gun, the second shell blowing up the boiler of the steamer *Dragon* lying alongside the frigate. But by the time the third shell had been fired the *Monitor* again intervened, and the fight between the ironclads was renewed.

Ineffectual broadsides were fired again and again at the *Monitor*, and then Lieutenant Jones drew off for position and came at full speed at his foe, intending to ram, but Worden evaded the shock, so that only a slanting blow was received, and again poured in the fire of his two massive guns upon the mailed side of his enemy. By this time, the ammunition in the turret having been exhausted, Worden hauled off for fifteen minutes to hoist up a fresh supply from the hold. Returning to the engagement at 11.30, Lieutenant Worden was watching the *Minnesota*, through the slit in the pilot-house, when a shell struck outside, within fifteen inches of him, and as it exploded filled his face and eyes with fragments of iron and powder.

BATTLE BETWEEN THE "MONITOR" AND "MERRIMAC"

Worden ordered the pilot to sheer off and sent for Lieutenant Greene, who hastened forward and found his commander leaning against the ladder that led to the pilot-house, his eyes closed, and blood oozing apparently from every pore of his face. He was led to his cabin, the surgeon was summoned, and Lieutenant Greene, after twenty minutes during which the *Monitor* had been drifting into shoal water, assumed command, and, hastening to the pilot-house, headed his ship toward the *Merrimac*, and fired two or three shots at her as she held her course up Elizabeth River. Believing that he had received a mortal wound, Worden asked how the battle went and whether the *Minnesota* was saved. When told that she was, and that the *Merrimac* had withdrawn, he said, "Then I can die happy."

Worden was taken to Washington for treatment, and for a few days his life was in peril, and for quite a time his eyesight was almost despaired of, but he finally recovered to perform other gallant exploits during the war.

The result of this contest in Hampton Roads, the first battle between ironclads, was momentous. The news of it spread throughout the world and attracted the immediate attention of the European governments to the necessity for making a change in their systems of naval armament. The scientific and naval worlds were given a new problem for discussion, and it was unanimously acknowledged that wooden war vessels were doomed. The English Defence Commission was assembled to consider "the effect of the recent engagement that had taken place in the Chesapeake between the naval forces of the United States and the Confederates," and its bearing upon the erection of the Spithead

forts. Russia and Sweden accepted the *Monitor* as the system upon which to reconstruct their navies, and for a time it was confidently believed the monitor system would entirely replace the high freeboard in naval architecture, an idea that has since been abandoned.

This battle was not only remarkable as the first contest between ironclad ships, for, as the Comte de Paris well says, in his *History of the Civil War in America:*

> Never were so many new inventions exposed at once to the practical ordeal of battle. Wooden ships of every class, together with ironclads, some with batteries, other with turrets, were all put on trial at the same time. It was the first time, beside such vessels, screw-propellers—which had, however, been in existence for nearly twenty years—had been seen to figure in a naval combat.

He might have truly added that shore batteries and land forces were also actively engaged in this struggle.

The moral effect of the contest was tremendous, both North and South. The Confederates endeavored to represent the fight as a drawn battle, but it is difficult to see how such a construction can prevail. The *Merrimac* came down on March 9th, not knowing the *Monitor* had arrived, with the purpose of completing the destroying of the Federal fleet, but she returned to Norfolk without accomplishing her object; she was compelled to go into dry dock for nearly a month after meeting the *Monitor*, and was never again engaged in battle. The *Monitor's* orders were to protect the United States ships at Hampton Roads, and that duty she certainly performed admirably. She was struck twenty-two times in the action with the *Merrimac*, but received no damage beyond slight indentations. She

fired, in all, forty-one shots, and of the ninety-seven indentations of shot on the *Merrimac's* armor twenty were from the 11-inch guns of the *Monitor*.

By a resolution of Congress, approved July 11, 1862,

> The thanks of Congress and of the American people are due and are hereby tendered to Lieutenant John L. Worden of the United States Navy, and to the officers and men of the iron-clad gunboat *Monitor* under his command, for the skill and gallantry exhibited by them in the late remarkable battle between the *Monitor* and the rebel iron-clad steamer *Merrimac*.
>
> Sec. 2. Be it further resolved: That the President of the United States be requested to cause this resolution to be communicated to Lieutenant Worden, and, through him, to the officers and men under his command.

On April 11th, the *Merrimac*, after refitting, came down to Newport News, under command of Commodore Tatnall. The *Monitor*, however, did not engage her, as Commodore Goldsborough desired to draw the Confederate ironclad farther down the Roads, with the purpose of ramming her with the *Vanderbilt* and other swift steamers, while the *Monitor* and the Stevens battery were to be held in reserve. But Tatnall was too wary to be caught in such a trap, and shortly afterward the *Merrimac* returned to Norfolk, and, at the evacuation of that city on May 10th, she was destroyed by the Confederates at Craney Island.

On May 15th, Commander John Rodgers was ordered to proceed with the *Monitor*, *Galena*, *Naugatuck*, *Port Royal*, and *Aroostook* up the James River to Richmond, and to shell the city to a surrender. The flotilla met with no obstruction until they reached Ward's or Drury's Bluff, about eight miles from Richmond, where

they encountered a heavy battery and two separate river barriers of piles, steamboats, and sail vessels, while the banks of the river were lined with sharpshooters who prevented any attempt to remove the obstructions. The *Galena* ran within six hundred yards of the battery and opened fire, but, although the *Monitor* ran ahead of the *Galena*, she was compelled to retire several hundred yards, as her guns could not be elevated sufficiently to clear the high bank. The *Naugatuck* was disabled by the bursting of her 100-pound Parrott-gun, and after nearly four hours the flotilla, having exhausted their ammunition, withdrew, with a loss of twenty-three killed and wounded, Commander Morris, of the *Port Royal*, being among the wounded.

That was the last active service of the *Monitor*. On December 29, 1862, under command of Commander John P. Bankhead, she sailed in tow of the *Rhode Island*, Captain Stephen D. Trenchard, for Beaufort, N. C. The next day was pleasant, but about 7 P.M. the wind increased, and at 11 P.M. Captain Bankhead signalling that he required assistance, the *Rhode Island* was stopped, and as the *Monitor* ranged alongside, Captain Bankhead hailed, "The *Monitor* is sinking!" Boats were at once lowered, and nearly all the crew were taken off when, about 1.30, on December 31st, the *Monitor* suddenly disappeared, carrying down with her four officers and nine men, as well as eight men of the *Rhode Island*.

The *Rhode Island's* cutter, in charge of an officer and seven men, was on the way to the *Monitor* at the time she went down; in the darkness the boat became separated from the ship, and for two days was adrift, being finally rescued by a merchant schooner.

The *Monitor* [says Rear-Admiral Stephen B. Luce, in a paper read before the Naval Institute, April 20, 1876], was the crystallization of forty centuries of thought on attack and defence, and exhibited in a singular manner the old Norse element of the American Navy; Ericsson (Swedish, *son of Eric*) built her; Dahlgren (Swedish, *branch of a valley*) armed her; and Worden (Swedish, *wordig, worthy*) fought her. How the ancient skalds would have struck their wild harps in hearing such names in heroic verse! How they would have written them in "immortal runes!"

So of the *Monitor*, "Minotaur [old Mr. Quincy said to me] it should have been, in its appearance in part of the great megalosaurus or deinotherium, which came out in scaly armor that no one could pierce, breathing fire and smoke from its nostrils; is it not the age of fable and of heroes and demigods over again?"

CHAPTER XVI

THE "NEW IRONSIDES"

AMONG the earliest systematic experiments with a view to the substitution of the resistance of iron for that of wood in the sides of warships, were those made by English government authorities in the years 1840–42. Heavy shot were fired at targets representing the side of an iron ship as ordinarily constructed, with the result that the thin plates, when struck by projectiles, crushed into fragments which scattered with most deadly effect, so that ordinary iron ships were proved to be wholly unsuitable for war purposes. In 1854 the Emperor Napoleon III. caused three floating batteries to be constructed, armored with iron of 3.937 inches in thickness, and these were used by the French before Kinburn in the attack upon the forts. Though frequently struck by 24-pound shot at a distance of six hundred yards, the armor of these boats was not penetrated, although deeply indented. The English government also had some batteries of a similar character built, but they were not finished in time to take part in the actions of the Crimean War.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Board of United States Naval Officers, organized in 1861 to consider these matters, recommended the construction of

one broadside ironclad vessel, built somewhat upon the plan of the English *Warrior*, from a model submitted by Messrs. Merrick & Sons of Philadelphia. That firm built the engines and fitted the armor, but the construction of the hull was sublet to the Messrs. Cramp, who have since built so many superb ships for our new navy. The *New Ironsides*, as the vessel was named, was frigate built, 220 feet in length, of 60 feet beam, 23 feet depth of hold, 13 feet draught, with a displacement of 3296 tons. She drew, with her armament and stores, 16 feet of water, and her greatest speed in smooth water was eight knots. Her frame was of white oak, averaging in thickness 20 inches, and her sides tumbled in at an angle of about 17 degrees from a point three feet above the water-line.

Her armor, which extended for 170 feet of her length, ran from a point three feet below the water-line to the waterways of the spar-deck. It was made in solid plates of rolled iron in lengths of 15 feet, 3 feet broad and 4½ inches thick. These plates were fastened to the solid sides of the ship—18 inches in thickness—by wood screws, their heads countersunk in the plating. The ends of the ship were but partially armored, the plating running up to the knuckle, from which point the sides began to tumble in, extended all around, and terminated at the bow in a ram. But massive iron bulkheads, with heavy sliding doors, protected the gun-deck from a raking fire, and the portholes were shielded by heavy iron shutters, handled inside by levers and tackles. The weak point of this vessel, as of all armored ships, was the spar-deck, which was only protected from a plunging fire—such as our ships were constantly exposed to in fighting batteries—by iron plating 1 inch in thickness, laid under the 3½ inches of

pine deck planking. The hatches were covered with heavy gratings of iron.

The powerful battery of this ship was fourteen 11-inch Dahlgren smooth-bores and two 150-pound Parrott rifles of 8-inch calibre. There were also two 50-pound Dahlgren rifles on the spar-deck, bow and stern, but these were never used in action. These guns were all mounted on iron carriages, the first of their kind used in the navy. The pilot-house, built of 10-inch laminated plates, was placed amidships.

In describing this vessel, Rear-Admiral George E. Belknap, who, as Lieutenant-Commander, was the executive officer of the *New Ironsides* in all her engagements before Charleston, says in a reminiscent paper:

> In appearance the ship was the personification of ugliness. She had neither graceful line nor curve. Her very lack of symmetry suggested the genuineness of her intent. It bespoke defiance to foe—confidence to friend. She was the bane of the colliers; not one of them liked to go alongside of her to deliver coal, especially, when there was any sea on. Such occasions, indeed, gave a rude test of their patriotism; for it was like being thrown against a rock to touch her in rolling, and the recording angel must have been busy at times blotting out the transgressions of the exasperated skippers as they hurled their oaths at what they called "the d——d iron box!"

Early in the autumn of 1862, the *Ironsides* was commissioned at Philadelphia by Commodore Thomas Turner, and her first service was at Newport News, where she remained for two or three months on the lookout for successors to the *Merrimac*, that failed to appear, and in January, 1863, she sailed for Port Royal, where she was prepared for the projected attack upon

the defences of Charleston, to which place she was hurried by the late successful raid made upon the fleet blockading that port by the Confederate rams *Palmetto State* and *Chicora.*

The arrival of the *New Ironsides* off Charleston early in February was a great relief to the blockading fleet, and preparations were hurried forward for the contemplated attack upon Forts Sumter and Moultrie. Among other devices the spar-deck of the *Ironsides*—her weak point—was covered with bags of sand, which protection was in turn supplemented by spreading green rawhides over the sand-bags. To add still further to the horrid odor arising from these hides, they and the sides of the ship were treated to a heavy dressing of tallow—the idea being that the grease would aid in deflecting the expected projectiles.

As the *New Ironsides* was the flagship, and the various captains of the fleet were summoned on board for their final instructions on the day of the attack, Admiral Belknap says:

> It is no discredit to the Christian character of the monitor captains to add that their wrestling with the grease, as they clambered up the ship's side by means of the Jacob's-ladder and man-ropes, conduced neither to amiability of temper, nor to special observance of the third commandment.

By noon of the 7th of April all the attacking force, including the *Ironsides*, with Admiral Du Pont and staff on board, were across the bar and in readiness for the attack. The order of battle was that the eight ironclads, at intervals of a cable's length, with the *New Ironsides* in the centre, were to pass in silence the enemies' batteries on Morris Island, and then keep on up

the channel until reaching a position to the northward and westward of Fort Sumter, where they were to engage that work at a distance of from six hundred to eight hundred yards, firing low and aiming at the centre embrasure. The order was, line ahead in the following succession: *Weehawken*, 2, Captain John Rodgers; *Passaic*, 2, Captain Percival Drayton; *Montauk*, 2, Captain John L. Worden; *Patapsco*, 2, Commander Daniel Ammen; *New Ironsides*, 16, Commodore Thomas Turner; *Catskill*, 2, Commander George W. Rodgers; *Nantucket*, 2, Commander Donald McNeil Fairfax; *Nahant*, 2, Commander John Downes; *Keokuk*, 2, Commander Alexander C. Rhind.

A reserve squadron, of which Captain Joseph F. Green was senior officer, was formed outside the bar and near the entrance buoy, consisting of the wooden ships *Canandaigua*, *Housatonic*, *Huron*, *Unadilla*, and *Wissahickon*, which were to be in readiness to support the ironclads when they attacked the batteries on Morris Island. The *Weehawken*, as the leading ship, had a wooden raft attached to her bow to brush aside rope obstructions in the channel and to receive the shock of floating torpedoes.

At 1.15, at early ebb-tide, the fleet got under way, but was greatly delayed by the *Weehawken's* chain fouling her torpedo-catcher. As the fleet steamed up the channel, Admiral Belknap says, the Fleet Captain, the late Admiral C. R. P. Rodgers, remarked to him, on the gun-deck of the *New Ironsides*, "I shall be agreeably surprised if the first fire of the enemy does not strip the plating off this ship." It seemed to be a rather general opinion in the fleet that while the monitor turrets could not be penetrated by the enemy's ordnance, the armor of the *Ironsides* would not be

equally vulnerable; yet, as a matter of fact, the plating of that vessel was never penetrated by a shot during her fourteen engagements with the enemy at Charleston, in which she was struck 133 times.

By 2.50 the *Weehawken* came within range of Fort Moultrie, and a terrific hail of shot and shell was opened upon her. At 3.05 she opened fire, and as she ran up to the rope obstruction between Forts Moultrie and Sumter a torpedo exploded near her bow, which did no material damage. The fleet was now exposed to a cross-fire from the two Confederate forts, which in one hour and forty minutes fired 2209 shot, shell, and rifle-bolts, ranging from the 32-pounders to 10-inch Columbiads.

The aim of the enemy was very accurate, as they had their ranges marked by buoys, and it was soon found that before such a fire the monitors were not invulnerable. Turrets and port-stoppers jammed and would not work, gun-carriages and steering-gear were disabled, bolt-heads and nuts broke at the impact of the shot and flew like grape-shot inside the turrets and pilot-house of the *Nahant*, where four officers and men were wounded, one mortally.

The *Keokuk*, a double-turreted monitor, with one 11-inch gun in each turret, was an experimental ship, the armor being composed of alternate layers and rings of wood and iron laid on horizontally. This vessel and the *Nahant* got in nearer to Sumter than the monitors, and for thirty minutes they received the concentrated fire of the two forts. The *Keokuk* was struck ninety times, nineteen of these shot going completely through her, at and below the water-line. Her turrets were pierced several times, one gun-carriage was disabled, and one port-shutter shot away. The water soon

began to pour into her so freely that her pumps could scarcely keep her afloat, and under these circumstances the gallant Captain Rhind, who had forced his ship almost up to the walls of Fort Sumter, felt compelled to withdraw, and the next morning, about seven o'clock, the *Keokuk* went down in shoal water off Morris Island. During the engagement Commander Rhind and about fifty of the crew were wounded by flying fragments, some severely. Acting Assistant Paymaster John Read,[1] who had charge of the magazine, aided the surgeon in caring for the wounded, and, after filling up all the berths in the staterooms with the poor fellows, he was forced to place the others on the wardroom table.

The diary kept by Dr. Charles Ellery Stedman of Boston, surgeon of the *Nahant*, graphically describes the scene on board that vessel. He says:

I saw the first gun—a flash—a burst of white smoke—the report of the shell near the *Weehawken*, followed by broadsides from the forts on Sullivan's Island, the shot falling thick and fast, churning up the water around the leading vessels. Then the Captain sent me below, and I went to my station in the wardroom, where all was in readiness. Pretty soon a shot struck us just over Lover-

[1] Acting Assistant Paymaster John Read had a decidedly trying experience during his naval service. After the sinking of the *Keokuk*, he was ordered to the steamer *Granite City* in the West Gulf squadron. Before daylight on the morning of the 6th of May, 1864, while in the narrow Calcasieu River, the *Granite City* was attacked by a strong force of Confederates, with artillery. After a sharp engagement, the steamer was captured with great loss. Mr. Read, with one hundred and ten of his companions, was marched into the interior of Texas and confined for eight months in an open stockade, most of the time with no shelter. Seventy-nine of the one hundred and eleven men died in this prison and there were but thirty survivors, a loss of seventy per cent. Mr. Read is now (1902) one of the two survivors of these prisoners.

ing's head, knocking him off his stool, to his great delight; and after that balls, shell, and bolts rattled like hail upon us, down the turret, thrown by shot dropping alongside. "Here comes a wounded man," cried one of the boys, and whom should it be but the poor old pilot. "Open the door for another," and the old signal-quartermaster, Cobb, was brought down with his skull crushed. "Stand by, boys; make room for McAllister—God, we are catching it now!" When the *Weehawken* signalled she had nearly reached the obstructions, our shot were falling short, and Fort Sumter was sending balls into and over us. Her barbette was one living sheet of flame, blazing from her ten-inch guns and Whitworth rifles, throwing steel-pointed bolts. "My quartermaster is killed," sang out Captain Downes. "Pass him down and send up another!" "Mr. Clarke,"—to the ensign in charge of the 15-inch gun,—"you have n't hit anything yet!" "We are n't near enough, Captain Downes," roared Clarke. "Not near enough! D——n it, I 'll put you near enough! Starboard your helm, quartermaster," and our gallant little skipper headed the ship for the obstructions, with only the *Keokuk* in company, for the *Ironsides* had only fired four guns. It was then that the pilot and Cobb were struck down at the Captain's side by bolts flying from inside the pilot-house. As they fell, a piece of iron 78 pounds in weight came down on the Captain's foot, its fall having been broken by striking the wheel, thus saving his leg. We were now in a concentrated fire of terrible heat and accuracy. We were going right at the piles when two or three big shot struck the pilot-house and turret, jamming the latter so that it would n't turn, and we had to retreat perfectly disabled. As we turned the cry was heard, "Our wheel-ropes have parted!" At the moment it seemed like certain death, but they were righted at once by relieving tackles and we dropped down the channel to our old berth.

During all this time the *Ironsides* was lagging be-

hind, owing to the difficulty experienced in steering her, in consequence of a strange pilot being in the pilot-house.

The ship was anchored twice while under fire, to avoid colliding with the monitors, and altogether her first essay against the enemy was anything but a success; although, subsequently, after certain changes, she gave a good account of herself on several occasions.

After the fleet was withdrawn, on the afternoon of April 7th, Admiral Du Pont decided that it was not advisable to go in again, as, in his opinion, the defences of Charleston harbor could not be captured by a purely naval attack, and the *Ironsides* was left as guardian of the blockade, while the monitors were sent to New York and Port Royal for repairs, the *Nahant* and *Weehawken* subsequently going to Warsaw Sound, where the latter captured the Confederate ram *Atlanta* in an engagement of fifteen minutes, doing the work so quickly that the *Nahant* did not have a chance to fire a shot.

On July 10th, the monitor *Catskill*, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Dahlgren, who had relieved Dupont, accompanied by the *Montauk*, *Nahant*, and *Weehawken*, arrived off Charleston bar, which they crossed the next day, and made for the southern end of Morris Island, to cover the operations of General Gilmore's column. General Strong, with a heavy force, had, meanwhile, crossed the inlet and surprised and routed the enemy after an engagement of three hours. The monitors had aided the movement by sweeping along the shores of Morris Island and pouring a continuous fire on the retreating enemy. They then engaged Fort Wagner and Battery Gregg, defending the northern point of the island, keeping up their fire until sunset, when they

hauled off for the night. In this engagement the *Catskill* was hit sixty times, but neither she nor the other monitors were damaged in the least. The boats of the fleet, in command of Lieutenant Bunce of the *Weehawken* and Robeson of the *Ironsides*, had aided in putting the land forces across the inlet from Folly Island, and a battery of naval howitzers manned by sailors, under command of Bunce, did effective service in dislodging the enemy.

The next morning Gilmore assaulted Fort Wagner, but was repulsed, and it became evident that Wagner and Gregg could only be taken by regular approaches.

On July 17th, the *New Ironsides*, under command of Commodore Rowan, who had relieved Commodore Turner, crossed the bar, and on the eighteenth, in company with the Monitors, she stood up for Fort Wagner. Soon after one o'clock the *Ironsides* came within range, and the enemies' batteries opened upon her with furious force, but Rowan steadily held his way until he had attained a position within twelve hundred yards of Wagner, when he anchored and opened a continuous broadside fire upon the fort. The bursting shells threw up clouds of sand, and amidst this irresistible storm of shot and shell the enemy's fire soon slackened, and at times ceased altogether.

The fight was kept up until seven o'clock, when the fire of the works was discontinued, and at eight o'clock Gilmore assaulted the batteries, but after desperate fighting was obliged to withdraw with heavy loss, although at one time the storming party had partial possession of Wagner. During the night the Confederates threw in heavy reinforcements from James Island, and drove our troops back. When this became evident, the ironclads drew off out of range for the night. During this

day's fight the *Ironsides* fired 805 shells from her eight broadside guns, a weight of metal equal to forty tons, and she was struck but four times.

After a consultation between General Gilmore and Rear-Admiral Dahlgren, it was decided that the works at Cumming's Point, Wagner, and Gregg could only be taken by regular approaches. With a view to giving the men in the trenches and the artillerymen, advancing the siege batteries, cover from the enemy's fire, the ironclads engaged those works almost every day for weeks, while the monitors having Parrott rifles kept up a fire on Sumter until the Union sappers burrowed under Fort Wagner. In these attacks the *Ironsides* was often sent to the front, where the power of her battery was demonstrated by the storm of shells she poured on the enemy's works. She was frequently struck, and on one occasion, when with an exceptionally high tide the ship approached within nine hundred yards of Sumter, she was hit thirty-one times, mostly by 10-inch solid shot, though occasionally by steel rifle-bolts, but the ship never received serious damage. The smoke-stack was completely riddled, the iron ceiling of the casemate was shattered in several places; sometimes a shot knocked away a port-shutter, but the deck (her most vulnerable part) was well protected by the bags of sand with which it was covered, so that when a shot struck it scooped off the bag and then, glancing upward, went overboard. Thus while the deck planks were left almost unscarred, the iron plate underneath was invariably shattered by the impact of the shot.

Admiral Belknap, in his interesting reminiscent paper, from which I have freely drawn, notes that in all the ship's fighting, both at Charleston and Fort Fisher, no man was ever seriously hurt. The nearest

approach to it was one morning when a shot from Wagner, in cutting away a port-shutter, broke to pieces and splintered the rammer-handle in the sponger's hand as he was ramming home a charge. The wooden splinters inboard slightly wounded some of the gun's crew. In connection with this fortunate immunity from accident, the Confederate accounts of the attacks upon their forts on April 7th state that the *Ironsides* was at one time for nearly an hour lying directly over a torpedo charged with two thousand pounds of powder, which was connected by wires with the shore. Every effort was made to explode this torpedo, with no success, and it was afterward discovered that one of the wires had been severed by an ordnance wagon passing over it. On one occasion an 11-inch shot fired from Sumter, from one of the guns the Confederates had recovered from the wreck of the *Keokuk*, passed through the unprotected part of the *Ironsides'* bow, cut away the heavy chain, demolished the bitts, and finally brought up against the iron protective bulkhead, without doing any further damage.

When once fairly in action the port-shutters were, as a rule, kept up, and the officers became so accustomed to their exposure to fire that the Commodore, Executive Officer, and Pilot would often go on deck for a clearer view of the effect of their fire on the forts. The monitors, however, did not escape so easily. In the attack of August 16th, a plunging shot struck the top of the *Catskill's* pilot-house, and, shattering the inner plates into fragments, killed her captain, Commander George W. Rodgers, and Paymaster Woodbury, and wounded Pilot Penton and Master's Mate Trescott. Fortunately on that day Admiral Dahlgren was on board the *Weehawken*.

These attacks upon the forts were kept up until the 7th of September, when, to the intense gratification of the Union forces, it was found that both Wagner and Gregg had been abandoned during the previous night, and our forces came into full possession of Morris Island. Nineteen guns were found in Wagner, and the bomb-proof shelter of that work was still unharmed as, notwithstanding the terrific bombardment to which it had been subjected, the enemy had each night repaired the injuries inflicted during the previous day.

On the afternoon of that day the *Weehawken* was ordered to sound the channel between Cumming's Point and Sumter. While thus engaged she grounded, and Moultrie at once opened fire upon her. The Admiral immediately ordered the fleet to the front to engage the batteries on Sullivan's Island, to draw their fire from the *Weehawken*, and on this occasion hoisted his flag on the *Ironsides*. The fight, which lasted until darkness set in, was a hot one, and Captain Badger of the *Catskill* received a severe wound which lamed him for life. The *Ironsides* fired 152 shells, and was struck twenty-four times without receiving any injury. When the fleet retired the *Weehawken* was still aground, and the next morning at eight o'clock every gun on Sullivan's Island opened fire upon her. The fleet was hurried up to the front again to draw the fire of the batteries and, as on the day before, the *Ironsides* steamed up to within twelve hundred yards of Moultrie, where she anchored, and swinging to the flood-tide poured in her port battery upon Moultrie, firing with deliberation and the utmost steadiness, and receiving the concentrated fire of the Confederate batteries; the shot breaking into fragments against her armor or glancing off and flying hundreds of feet into the air.

In this action the monitors vied with each other in daring, Captain Simpson of the *Passaic* standing well up the channel and engaging Battery Bee at the inner extremity of the works, while Davis closed in with the *Montauk* upon Battery Marion, until the pilot protested he could go no farther, while Cornwall in the *Nahant* and Bryson in the *Lehigh* were seeking the closest quarters with the enemy. Calhoun, notwithstanding his *Weehawken* was still aground, took active part in the combat, and one of his shells produced an explosion in Moultrie that killed sixteen men and wounded twelve others.

For three hours this battle of ironclads against forts raged, until the batteries were, for the time at least, silenced and the ammunition of the fleet was well-nigh expended, and then Captain Rowan, who was senior officer, as Admiral Dahlgren was not present that day, made signal to withdraw, the *Ironsides* having fired nearly two hundred shells, and having only half a dozen rounds of ammunition remaining. The *Weehawken* was now afloat, and the whole fleet withdrew and returned to their old berths in the roadstead in good order, the *Ironsides* having been struck seventy-four times with no injury beyond the loss of a couple of port-shutters.

During the time this action was in progress Dahlgren was busily preparing for a boat expedition against Fort Sumter. On the seventh, after discovering the evacuation of Forts Wagner and Gregg, he had sent in a flag of truce to General Beauregard, demanding the surrender of Sumter, to which the sententious response was made: "Inform Admiral Dahlgren that he may have Fort Sumter when he can take and hold it!"

All the heavy boats of the blockading ships outside the bar were prepared, and on the night of the 8th of

September, under command of Commander Thomas Holdup Stevens, they moved up in five divisions, commanded by Lieutenant-Commander Edward P. Williams, Lieutenants George E. Remey, S. W. Preston, and Francis J. Higginson, and Ensign Charles H. Craven. With an accompanying detachment of marines under Captain McCauley, this force numbered four hundred men. An attack of this character, following immediately after a long and exhausting day's fight, might possibly have succeeded had it not been fully prepared for by the enemy. The Confederates had become fully possessed of our signal code, and had read the communication passing between the flagship and the vessels outside the bar,[1] while, as further evidence of the coming attack, boat-loads of men had been passing in all day over the bar in plain sight of the enemy. As a result of this negligence, the coming of our assaulting party was fully anticipated and its failure was a foregone conclusion.

[1] They obtained this knowledge [says Scharf, in his *History of the Confederate Navy*, page 699] by shrewd strategy. A trap was laid for one of their signal pickets in the Florida district, and he was captured and brought to Charleston. In confinement with him was placed Captain Pliny Bryan, Assistant Adjutant-General on Beauregard's staff, disguised in Federal uniform, and passing himself off as a prisoner. Captain Bryan had made a study of the signal flags taken from the wreck of the *Keokuk*, and by some adroit questioning he drew all the essential secrets of the code out of his quondam comrade, and soon was as familiar with them as any Federal officer. The Confederate signal-service men were taught the system, and were able to read any of the messages that passed between the ships or between them and the shore. A signal-officer on board the *Chicora*, named Daniels [says Scharf], read a signal on the afternoon of September 8th from Dahlgren's flagship for a boat from each ship, commanded by a lieutenant, to assemble at the flagship, at ten o'clock, for an attack on Fort Sumter. This information was at once sent from Commodore Tucker to General Beauregard, and effective preparations were made to repel the assault.

About midnight the boats started, at first in tow of a tug, and when within about eight hundred yards from Sumter the line was dropped, and the boats pulled in for the forts in two lines, one for the northeastern, the other for the southwestern angle. When within close range, to the consternation of the assaulting party, not only did the garrison hurl at the advancing boats an incessant fire of musketry, hand-grenades, and fire-balls, but the batteries of Sullivan and James Islands and the guns of the ironclad *Chicora* covered three fronts of the approaches to the base of Sumter with a storm of shell, grape, and cannister. Under these circumstances it is marvellous that a single one of the boats effected a landing, yet several of them pulled through the hail of fire and got their men on shore, but only to find that they must surrender, as the breaches that had been made in the walls had been filled on the inside by huge masses of sand, and only a party well equipped with scaling-ladders could have had a possibility of success. In less than half an hour the disastrous affair was over, and Stevens was forced to retreat with a loss of three killed, while thirteen officers and 102 men were made prisoners, four boats were captured, and three stands of color. One of these was the flag hoisted by Major Anderson on Sumter in 1861, which that officer had taken with him when he surrendered; it had been entrusted to the boat expedition to hoist after the expected capture of that fort. The failure of this unfortunate enterprise seemed to paralyze Admiral Dahlgren, and that was the last attack made upon the Confederate forts at Charleston by our fleet.

On the evening of the 5th of October an attempt was made by the Confederates to destroy the *Ironsides*.

Scharf, in his *History of the Confederate Navy*, page 695, says:

Most of the various [Confederate] boat expeditions that had been sent out were with a view to discovering the possibilities of a torpedo attack upon the *New Ironsides*, which was more troublesome to Fort Wagner than all the monitors combined, her quick-firing broadside of 11-inch guns being far more annoying than the slow discharges from the turret vessels.

Admiral Belknap, in describing the incident, says:

On the evening of October 5th the watch on deck had been set, and the watch below were sleeping at the guns. The marines not on sentinel duty were gathered aft on the port side of the quarter-deck, lying down in their overcoats, with accoutrements buckled on and muskets at their sides. Many of the officers were sitting on the stern-rail telling stories and fishing, for after evening quarters the sacred character of the quarter-deck was in abeyance for the time, and sentinels and lookouts were posted at short intervals, fore and aft, on both sides. A gallant fellow by the name of Howard, who had been promoted from the forecastle to the grade of Acting Ensign, was officer of the watch. Captain Rowan and myself had been walking the quarter-deck together engaged in a chat, when about nine o'clock the Captain said he would go below. I replied that I would also go below, as I had some letters in hand. But hardly had we reached our respective quarters when Howard was heard to hail a boat, and the hail seemed unanswered. "Boat ahoy!" rang out from Howard's lips: still no reply. "Boat ahoy! If you don't answer I'll fire into you!" was his final command. At that instant a musket flashed from the approaching object and Howard fell back from the gangway, exclaiming, "I am shot!" And ere the words were fully spoken the ship shook and trembled from rail to keelson from the shock of a tremendous

explosion. A moment more and a huge column of water, thrown up into the air at least sixty feet, deluged the deck amidships and the engine- and fire-rooms by its falling flood. The flash of the musket, the cry of Howard, and the crash of the explosion came in successive strokes like the beats of a clock.

The marines, springing to their feet, poured forth volley after volley of musketry at the faintly discernible object, which rapidly drifted to seaward with the strong ebb and soon disappeared from sight. Meanwhile, officers and crew hurried to their stations at quarters, the watch below rubbing their eyes and wondering what it all meant.

The Commodore was on his way out of the cabin and I was running up the wardroom ladder when the explosion took place. The pumps were immediately sounded and a cutter despatched, in command of Lieutenant J. J. Read, in quest of the audacious stranger, but the night was misty and moonless, and the search was unsuccessful. The monitors in the meanwhile had slipped their cables, having felt the shock, and were groping about in search of other infernal machines that might be lying in wait. Mr. Howard and the sentries said the torpedo-boat, or *David*, as the stranger proved to be, looked like the back of a grampus, and she seemed to have a small smoke-stack and a hatch amidships.

Some of the water thrown up by the explosion fell back over the *David* and down her smoke-pipe and put out her fires. The volleys poured in by the marines also compelled Lieutenant W. T. Glassell, the plucky officer in command, and his three men to jump overboard. Glassell and one of his men swam under the bow of a coal schooner, where they were discovered among the head-gear and were turned over to the Admiral. The engineer, Toombs, after a time swam back to the *David* and, finding the pilot, Cannon, who could not swim, holding on to her, they climbed on board, adjusted the engine, started the fire, and headed for Charleston, where they arrived safely next morning.

The *Ironsides*, with her usual good fortune, was not materially damaged. The explosion drove in one hanging knee, eight inches below the water-line, broke and splintered several of the eight-inch ceiling planks, and crushed into fragments one of the heavy engine-room beams. The Master-at-Arms was thrown up against the ceiling of the berth-deck and broke his leg; and poor Howard, who was promoted by the Admiral on the spot, had been shot in the groin with buckshot and lived but three days. After this experience the *Ironsides* was surrounded by fenders rigged out from her side supporting a stout netting, a powerful search-light was kept in operation all night, and boats rowed guard on moonless nights, but no further attempt was made by the enemy to torpedo her.

On October 22d, after a council with his commanding officers, Dahlgren decided not to make another general attack upon the forts until expected reinforcements arrived in December, but desultory attacks were continued on Sumter by the monitors carrying Parrott guns. On December 7th, the *Weehawken* suddenly sunk at her anchor, carrying down with her four officers and twenty-seven of the crew. This was caused, it was believed, by water coming through the hawse-holes and accumulating forward so as to bring her down by the head. The vessel had undoubtedly been structurally weakened when she was aground the previous September.

On the 17th of February, 1864, the *Housatonic* was sunk by a fish torpedo-boat, built in Mobile the previous year. Her motive power was a hand-propeller worked by eight men, and she was intended to dive under a vessel, dragging a torpedo after her, which would explode on contact with the hull of the enemy. This craft sunk at Mobile during an experiment and

her whole crew were suffocated, and after her arrival at Charleston she was swamped by the wash of a passing steamer and again sunk, drowning Lieutenant Payne and a crew of eight men. Incredible as it may seem, when she was raised Lieutenant George E. Dixon, C.S.N., asked permission to try her on the *Housatonic*, then lying in the North Channel, off Beach Inlet. General Beauregard consented, but insisted that she should be used on this service with a spar torpedo, in the same manner as the *David*.

About nine o'clock on the evening of February 17th, Master Crosby, officer of the deck of the *Housatonic*, detected something approaching "that looked like a plank moving on the water." Before he could give the alarm the torpedo was launched and a hole was knocked through the ship's side so large that she went down in four minutes. Five of the crew were killed by the shock; the remainder took refuge in the rigging, from which they were rescued by boats from the *Canandaigua* when the *Housatonic* touched bottom. The "fish," however, went down with her whole crew, making twenty-seven brave men in all sacrificed in that craft. After the war she was found lying on the bottom, about one hundred feet from the *Housatonic*. In this connection it may be noted, as an evidence of the efficiency of the Confederate torpedo service, that during the Civil War thirty-two Union ships—of which four were monitors and three armored gun-boats—were sunk by torpedoes.

In the latter part of May, the *Ironsides* was ordered to Philadelphia for docking, when Commodore Rowan was detached and ordered to the command of the ironclad *Nadawasco*. After some badly needed repairs she returned to the North Atlantic squadron, under

[illegible] command of a squadron [illegible] Fort Fisher. The reduction was Hampton Roads where a formidable fleet [illegible] the United States, including the New Ironsides and the monitors had assembled.

In September 5, 1864, Rear-Admiral Farragut was assigned to the command of the North Atlantic squadron to relieve Rear-Admiral S. F. Lee. The intention of the Department was to send Farragut to reduce the formidable fortifications at Cape Fear River, but finding that the admiral's health rendered it necessary that he should rest Navy Secretary Welles detached Rear-Admiral Porter from command of the Mississippi squadron in September 1864 and ordered him to relieve Admiral Lee in the command of the North Atlantic squadron and prepare to fit the attack upon Fort Fisher.

In December with the Army under command of Ben Butler having been compelled to give up Beaufort, N. C., for coal and ammunition, Fort Fisher was one of the most formidable earthworks in the Atlantic coast. The parapets were twenty-five feet thick with an average height of twenty feet, while the traverses were feet higher, were ten to twelve feet thick. It mounted seven of a heavy guns. The first attempt made was the attack of [illegible] Porter. She was [illegible] and [illegible] of the fort and in the night of December [illegible] the attack was [illegible] but it was [illegible] and [illegible] damage the fort in the least degree. In fact [illegible] Lamb in command of the [illegible] at Federal Point noted in his official report: "December [illegible] A blockader got aground near the fort [illegible] herself and blew up."

At daybreak on the morning with the fleet stood in

in line of battle, got out springs, and took position as follows: *Ironsides*, Commodore William Radford; *Monadnock*, Commander E. G. Parrott; *Mahopac*, Lieut.-Commander E. E. Potter; and *Canonicus*, Lieut.-Commander George E. Belknap; the latter having the inside berth. They all anchored in line about a length apart, at a distance of three quarters of a mile from the fort, and each vessel had in its rear a gunboat to serve as a tender. A quarter of a mile farther out came a line comprising the *Minnesota*, *Colorado*, *Wabash*, and other large ships, and outside of these another line of smaller vessels. Other divisions of gunboats were placed north and south of the ironclads for the purpose of enfilading the works. The squadron numbered thirty-three ships with over four hundred guns, beside a reserve of seventeen gunboats with about one hundred guns.

Just before one o'clock the *Ironsides* opened fire upon the fort, immediately followed by the monitors, and within half an hour the *Minnesota* and the other frigates obtained the range. The fort kept up an active fire, but the terrible broadsides of the *Ironsides* soon silenced the guns on the northeast face of the fort, and by the time the whole tremendous fire of the fleet—115 shots a minute—was concentrated upon the works, the gunners were driven within the shelter of their bomb-proofs.

In one hour and fifteen minutes after the first gun from the *Ironsides* [says Admiral Porter], not a shot came from the fort. Two magazines had been blown up by our shells and the fort set on fire in several places, and such a torrent of missiles was falling into and bursting over it that it was impossible for any human being to stand it. Finding that the batteries were silenced completely, I directed the ships

to keep up a moderate fire in hopes of attracting the attention of the transports and bringing them in.

General Butler arrived late in the afternoon with a part of the transports, and the fleet drew off to its anchorage. During the four hours the engagement lasted, between forty and fifty men were killed and wounded in the fleet by the explosion of 100-pounder Parrott guns, which Porter declared "were calculated to kill more of our own men than those of the enemy."

The following morning, under cover of the gunboats, the disembarkation of the troops began about three miles above the fort, the fleet, meanwhile, keeping up a slow and deliberate fire on the fort sufficient to keep the enemy from opening on the troops. In the skirmishing which ensued, one Union officer succeeded in gaining the parapet, and brought away a Confederate flag that had been shot away by the fleet. A Union soldier went into the works and led out a horse, killing the orderly mounted on him and taking his despatches from his body. Another fired his musket into the bomb-proof among the Confederate soldiers, and Porter said in his letter to General Butler: "I wish some more of your gallant fellows had followed the officer who took the flag from the parapet and the brave fellow who brought the horse out from the fort. I think they would have found it an easier conquest than was supposed." The result of the reconnaissance made by General Godfrey Weitzel induced him to report to General Butler "that it would be butchery to order an assault, as the works had not been injured as a defensive work by the navy fire, and that nothing but the operations of a regular siege would reduce the fort." So, to the great chagrin of Porter, the troops were re-

embarked, and the fleet was withdrawn to Beaufort two days later, as the Admiral felt it was hopeless to expect to accomplish the reduction of the fort without the active co-operation of a powerful land force. He reported to Secretary Welles, however, on December 27th: "It [the fort] can be taken at any moment, in an hour's time, if the right man is sent with the troops." And these words of the Admiral were fully justified two weeks later when General Terry easily accomplished a task that General Butler had so quickly abandoned.

But the popular dissatisfaction at the North was so great at this apparent abandonment of the effort to reduce the defences of Wilmington—now the last remaining stronghold of the Confederates on the Atlantic coast—that on January 2, 1865, General Alfred Terry, commanding the 1st Division of the Twenty-Fourth Army Corps, was ordered to take command of the two divisions which had participated in the first expedition, to which was added a brigade under Colonel Abbott, from Terry's own division, and two batteries, the whole numbering eight thousand men. With this force Terry proceeded on January 5th to Fortress Monroe, and thence to Beaufort, where on the eighth he arranged with Admiral Porter a plan of operations against Fort Fisher, but in consequence of bad weather the transports could not be brought to New Inlet until January 12th.

On January 13th, the troops began their disembarkation at a point about five miles above the fort, the operation having been covered by the lighter vessels of the fleet, which approached within eight hundred yards of the shore and shelled the woods to guard against any attack in the direction of Masonboro Inlet. With the aid of two hundred boats and several steam

tugs from the fleet the entire force was landed with three days' rations and entrenching tools and forty rounds of ammunition for each man, between the hours of 8 A.M. and 3 P.M. While this was going on, the five ironclads, led by the *Ironsides*, from their old position in front of Fort Fisher maintained a steady rain of shells upon the works.

The wooden ships joined with the ironclads, and one of the most terrific bombardments in naval annals was maintained. From 4.30 to 6 P.M. it was reckoned that four shots were fired from the fleet every second, or about 20,000 in all, and the Confederates were kept close within their bomb-proofs until dark, when the wooden ships drew off for the night, the ironclads remaining at their anchorage and firing an occasional shell.

Major-General Whiting, C. S. Army, in his report to General Robert E. Lee of this affair, in a letter dated February 19, 1865, says:

On the 13th and 14th of January the fleet stationed itself with the definite object of destroying the land defence by direct and enfilade fire, the latter a *feu d'enfilement* to knock down the traverses, destroying all guns, and pound the northeast salient into a practicable slope for the assaulting column. By 12 M., Sunday, not a gun remained on the island front. The palisade was entirely swept away; the mines in advance, so deeply did the enemy's shot plow, were so isolated from the wires they could not be used. Not a man could show his head in that infernal storm, and I could only keep a lookout in the safest position to inform me of the movements of the enemy. Contrary to previous practice, the fleet kept up the fire all night. Cooking was impracticable. The men in great part, in Fisher, at the second attack, were not those of the first, and were much

more demoralized. The casualties were greater, with but one ration for three days. Such was the condition when the parapets were manned, on the enemy's ceasing fire for the assault.

The demoralizing effect upon the Confederate force of the withering fire of the Union fleet during the two days preceding the assault is clearly shown in this report of the Confederate General.

On the night of the thirteenth, General Terry threw up a defensive line of entrenchments at an average distance of two miles from the fort, reaching from Cape Fear River to the sea, but after a careful reconnaissance Terry decided that the better policy would be to attempt an immediate assault, a policy with which Porter heartily concurred. It was therefore determined that the navy should keep up a severe bombardment of the fort to cover the assaulting column, the fire to be continued against other parts of the work after the assault had been commenced. The attack was to be made at 3 P.M., on the fifteenth, the army assaulting the western half of the land face, while a co-operating body of sailors and marines attacked the northeast bastion as a diversion to the enemy from the main attack.

At 11 A.M., on the fifteenth, all the vessels of the fleet were in position, and a fire was commenced, magnificent alike for its power and its accuracy. Under cover of this fusillade, Fleet Capt. K. R. Breese landed on the beach with sixteen hundred sailors, armed with cutlasses, revolvers, and carbines, and four hundred marines under Capt. L. L. Dawson. This force at once began digging rifle-pits, working their way within two hundred yards of the fort. Terry's troops held the entrenchments facing Wilmington, against which

General Hoke, with five thousand Confederate veterans, had begun to demonstrate.

At 3.30 P.M., signal was made to the fleet to change the direction of their fire, and soon afterward the sailors rushed with desperate valor toward the parapet of the fort, which at once swarmed with the enemy pouring in upon their assailants a deadly fire of grape, canister, and musketry. The marines, who were to have covered the assaulting party, for some unexplained reason failed to fire upon the enemy on the parapet, all of whom, in the opinion of Admiral Porter, might have been picked off. Notwithstanding the hot fire, the naval detachment dashed on, a large number reaching the ditch, while some even gained the parapet, whence they were, however, swept away like chaff. Seeing the slaughter in front, and observing that they were not covered by the marines, the men in the rear began to retreat, and their example was soon followed by others, until this attack failed, after between two and three hundred of the assaulting column had either been killed or wounded. But their effort had not been without avail, for the attack of the sailors diverted the attention of the enemy from the main storming party of the troops and made their work easier.

General Ames's division rushed toward the fort with Curtis's brigade in the lead. The palisades had been so much injured by the fire of the fleet that an entrance was readily made in the face of a fierce enfilading fire, and a lodgment was soon effected on the west end of the land front. Pennypacker's and Bell's brigades followed in rapid succession, and after hand-to-hand fighting of the most desperate character nine traverses were carried in succession by our men.

During this assault the *Ironsides*, by order of the

Admiral, kept up a deadly fire on the traverses held by the Confederates as they fell back from the advance of the troops. At five o'clock, when one half of the fort was in our possession, Abbott's brigade was ordered up from the defensive line, while the fire from the ships was concentrated on the part of the works not yet occupied by our forces, and by ten o'clock the Confederates were driven from their last stronghold, and the occupation of the fort was complete.

The enemy fell back to Federal Point, where, being cut off from further retreat, they surrendered at midnight. The result of the fall of Fort Fisher was the fall of Fort Caswell, and the works between Caswell and Smithville up to the battery at Reeves' Point,—in all 169 guns,—and the destruction by the Confederates of their armored steamers *Tallahassee* and *Chickamauga*, which were set fire to and blown up. The Union loss in this fight was: army, 169 killed and wounded; navy, 88 killed, including Lieutenants S. W. Preston and H. B. Porter and Assistant Surgeon William Longshaw, and 271 wounded.

All the guns in the fort facing the ships had been dismounted or injured by the fire of the fleet, so that they could not be used, but the work itself had received no injury that could not be speedily repaired. Admiral Porter, who had visited the Malakoff during the siege of Sebastopol, declared Fort Fisher to be a far more formidable work than that famous Russian stronghold.

With the fall of these works the blockade-runners lost their last important port of entry at Wilmington. Scharf says of the capture of Fort Fisher:

The fall of Wilmington was the severest blow to the Confederate cause which it could receive from the loss of any

port. It was far more injurious than the capture of Charleston, and, but for the moral effect, even more hurtful than the evacuation of Richmond. With Wilmington and the Cape Fear River open, the supplies that reached the Confederate armies would have enabled them to have maintained an unequal contest for years, but with the fall of Fort Fisher, this constant stream of supplies was effectually cut off and the blockade made truly effective—not by the navy fleet, but by its captures on land.

In his report to the Navy Department, January 28, 1865, Admiral Porter says of the *Ironsides* and of Commodore Radford:

His vessel did more execution than any vessel in the fleet, and even when our troops were on the parapet I had so much confidence in the accuracy of his fire, that he was directed to fire on the traverses, in advance of our troops, and clear them out. This he did most effectually, and, but for this, victory might have not been ours. . . . He seemed never to tire of fighting, and for three days lay within 1000 yards of Fort Fisher without moving his anchor, and made the rebels feel that we came there to stay.

The forty-five vessels in the squadron, mounting upward of five hundred guns, in weight of metal and in the rapidity and force of their fire probably exceeded any fleet that up to that time had ever attacked fortifications. Admiral Porter declared that this fleet could have silenced Fortress Monroe, considered the strongest and most important work in the United States, in a day and have dismounted all the conspicuous guns, and that the *Ironsides* could demolish all the casemates in a few hours.

The news of this successful operation of the army

David D Porter

ADMIRAL DAVID D. PORTER U.S.N.

and navy was received with the greatest enthusiasm throughout the North, and on February 10th a joint resolution was adopted tendering the thanks of Congress to General Terry and Admiral Porter and the officers and men under their command for their brilliant and decisive victory. Resolutions were also adopted by the legislatures of the States of New York and Rhode Island.

On the 17th of January, 1865, the *Ironsides* was ordered by Admiral Porter to proceed to Norfolk in company with the *Susquehanna*, and in his orders the Admiral said to Commodore Radford:

> To your vessel more than any other in the squadron is the country indebted for the capture of the outworks of Cape Fear River. . . . I have never tired in looking on in admiration at the endurance of your vessel and the terrible execution she has done in your hands. . . . In the late assaults on the fort the army are mainly indebted to you for their success, for, notwithstanding their gallantry, they could not have passed from traverse to traverse without the aid of your guns.

The *Ironsides* had barely arrived at Hampton Roads when the passage of the obstructions at Dutch Gap in the James River by the Confederate squadron, on January 23d, caused the greatest excitement at Washington.

The withdrawal of a large portion of the fleet for the operations against Fort Fisher tempted the enemy to make a demonstration for the purpose of breaking the pontoon bridge over the James and thus severing the communication between the Union forces on the two banks. If successful, it was Lee's purpose to make an attack in force on the north bank of the river. A

formidable Confederate fleet, consisting of the ironclads *Virginia*, *Fredericksburg*, and *Richmond*, carrying four guns each; and the wooden vessels *Drewry*, *Nansemond*, and *Hampton*, two guns each; the *Buford*, one gun, the steamer *Torpedo*, and three torpedo-boats, left Richmond on January 23d, under orders from Secretary Mallory to Flag-Officer Mitchell to make the demonstration in force.

About midnight the fleet passed Fort Brady and began to pass the obstructions in the river. The Union batteries opened on the fleet, to which they replied, dismounting a 100-pounder in the battery. The chain in front of the obstructions, beyond the lower end of the Dutch Gap Canal, was cut, and the *Fredericksburg*, being of light draught, passed through, but, in attempting to follow her, the *Richmond*, *Virginia*, and *Drewry* grounded on a lower tier of obstructions, and as daylight appeared, the *Drewry* was abandoned and subsequently blown up by the battery on shore. As the *Virginia's* engine became disabled and a number of Union vessels were being assembled, it was decided to abandon the attempt, and the Confederate fleet returned to Richmond.

Early in the autumn of 1865, the *New Ironsides* was sent to Philadelphia, where she went out of commission, and was moored with the monitors at League Island. On December 16, 1865, the ship took fire and was entirely destroyed. The cause of this fire was believed to be accidental.

CHAPTER XVII

THE "KEARSARGE"

THE *Kearsarge*, a screw sloop-of-war of 1031 tons, was built at the Portsmouth Navy Yard in 1861, at a cost of $104,000. She was 214½ feet in length over all and 198½ feet on the water-line, 33 feet 10 inches beam, 16 feet deep, with two engines of 400 horse-power. Her armament was two 11-inch smooth-bore Dahlgren guns and one 30-pounder rifle pivoted, with four 32-pounders in broadside. Her complement was twenty-two officers and 163 men, and she was first commissioned by Commander C. W. Pickering.

On January 10, 1861, the *Kearsarge* was ordered to join the West Gulf squadron, but eight days later these orders were revoked, and Commander Pickering was directed to proceed with all possible despatch to Cadiz in search of the *Sumter*, which had just been reported as having arrived at that port. The *Kearsarge* sailed on February 4th, and, touching at Madeira on the twenty-second of that month, learned that the *Sumter* had been last heard of at Gibraltar. It is interesting, in view of the subsequent fortunate career of the *Kearsarge*, to note that Commander Pickering, in his letter to the Navy Department from Fayal, says of his ship:

I wish I could make a favorable report of the vessel, but

am constrained to say that with her present weight of armament she is only adapted to river and harbor defence(?). Her bulwarks and coamings of hatches are so extremely low, and she rolls so deeply as to force the necessity of battening down the hatches even in moderate gales. During the passage there has not been a day in which it would have been at all safe to cast loose the pivot-guns.

The *Kearsarge* sailed from Fayal on February 27th for Cadiz, and for two months after her arrival she was detained in the royal dockyard of that port undergoing repairs to her machinery, which Commander Pickering reported should not have occupied as many weeks. The *Kearsarge* then ran over to Algeciras, where she relieved the *Tuscarora* in the task of watching the *Sumter*, then lying at Gibraltar.

Early in October, 1862, Captain Pickering received information that Semmes had given up the *Sumter*, had taken command of the *Alabama*, and had been seen with that vessel in the vicinity of the Azores. The *Kearsarge* at once sailed for Fayal in pursuit of the *Alabama*, and for a month cruised among the islands without encountering the object of her search. On October 27th she sailed for Algeciras, as it was reported that, under new officers, the *Sumter* was to be sent to sea again, and during the following winter the *Kearsarge* was kept on patrol duty between Gibraltar, Cadiz, and the Azores.

April 8, 1863, Captain John A. Winslow relieved Captain Pickering in command of the *Kearsarge* at Fayal, and the ship cruised in search of the *Alabama* without success during the following six months. In September, Captain Winslow received word that the Confederate steamer *Florida* had put into Brest, and he at once sailed for that port, and maintained a vigi-

lant watch over that vessel for several months. On December 26th, the *Florida* came out into the roads, and three days later the *Kearsarge* put to sea and cruised off the French coast, in view of meeting her, but the Confederate vessel did not leave port until February 11th, when, taking advantage of a thick fog one rainy night, she slipped out through the southern passage and evaded the American ship, to the great disappointment of Captain Winslow and his officers and crew. Captain Winslow now had as his executive officer Lieutenant James S. Thornton, who had been executive of the *Hartford* when she passed the forts at New Orleans.

The *Kearsarge* continued to cruise with the hope of falling in with the *Florida* or the *Georgia*, reports constantly reaching Captain Winslow that these vessels still remained in the Channel, and as the season was of unusual severity the ship was driven by stress of weather from point to point, from England to France, to take shelter under any headland that offered a lee. Meanwhile, the Confederate cruiser *Rappahannock* was lying in the inner harbor of Calais, waiting for an opportunity to get to sea, and Captain Winslow had a small steamer hired at £10 a day keeping close watch upon her and ready to follow and signal her departure to the *Kearsarge*. Letters were constantly being sent from our diplomatic agents in France and England to Captain Winslow, warning him that the Confederates were preparing to make an attempt to capture the *Kearsarge* with the *Georgia*, *Florida*, and *Rappahannock*, but beyond keeping his ship in constant readiness for action Winslow does not seem to have troubled himself at the prospect of such a combined attack by the enemy. Writing to Mr. F. H.

Morse, United States Consul at London, under date of February 4, 1864, from Cadiz, Captain Winslow says:

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of copy of your communication to Mr. Dayton [Minister to France], affording information of the supposed design of the Confederate cruisers, with other contents. Although preparation is essential, I am, however, not disposed to endorse all the papers may say of what is to be done by rebel cruisers. First, I know nothing of a challenge, and, inasmuch as we had been for some time blockading Brest, and our business is to intercept the *Florida* and other rebel cruisers, I can't see the necessity of printed bombast, when, at any moment they desire, a meeting with this ship can be had. Again, in response to a communication of Consul Putnam, in which he informed me of having seen a letter from a lieutenant of the *Georgia*, expressing the intention of the rebels to combine for the capture of the *Kearsarge*, I stated to him that no obstacle would be thrown in the way of the *Georgia's* and *Florida's* junction, if such intention was honest. Some repairs to the machinery of this ship will detain us longer here than I anticipated, and I cannot expect to arrive in Brest before the 18th inst. With my thanks to you for your information, I am, &c., &c.

There is a decidedly wholesome ring in this epistle that is echoed in the letter of Secretary Welles, dated March 2, 1864, in which he says to Captain Winslow:

I have received your No. 2 with its enclosures, dated Cadiz, February 4, 1864, in reference to the rumored designs of a joint attack by the rebel cruisers in French ports on the *Kearsarge*. In case of such an attack, which, however, I do not think probable, the Department will rely on the *Kearsarge* to defend herself and cripple or capture her assailants.

UNITED STATES SHIP "KEARSARGE"

[redacted]

The repairs completed, Winslow returned to his station, and on Sunday morning, June 12, 1864, the *Kearsarge* was quietly lying at anchor in the Scheldt at Flushing, Holland, when a telegram from Minister Dayton flashed over the wires from Paris, informing Captain Winslow that the famous Confederate cruiser *Alabama*, straight from the Cape of Good Hope, had arrived at Cherbourg the day before. A cornet was immediately displayed at the fore of the *Kearsarge*, and the report of a gun notified such officers and men as were ashore on liberty to return immediately on board. Before getting under way Captain Winslow informed the ship's company of the welcome news received and of the prospect of meeting the *Alabama*, and the announcement was received with hearty cheers. Winslow steamed at once to Dover for despatches, and on Tuesday the *Kearsarge* appeared off Cherbourg, where, to the intense delight of every one on board, the Confederate flag flying from the *Alabama's* peak could be seen inside the breakwater.

Fearing the application of the twenty-four-hours rule, Winslow remained outside the port, maintaining a close watch to prevent the escape of his wily enemy.

On Wednesday, July 15th, Captain Winslow went on shore to make an official visit upon the port admiral and Mr. Sias, the United States commercial agent. From the latter he received the following copy of a letter from Captain Semmes to M. Bonfils, the Confederate agent at Cherbourg:

C. S. S. "ALABAMA,"
CHERBOURG, June 14, 1864.

To A. Bonfils, Esq., Cherbourg;

SIR: I hear that you were informed by the United States consul, that the *Kearsarge* was to come to this port solely

for the prisoners landed by me, and that she was to depart in twenty-four hours. I desire you to say to the United States consul that my intention is to fight the *Kearsarge* as soon as I make the necessary arrangements. I hope this will not detain me more than to-morrow evening or after to-morrow morning at farthest. I beg she will not depart before I am ready to go out. I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
R. SEMMES, Captain.

On the following Saturday night the officers of the *Alabama* met their French friends and sympathizers at a supper in Cherbourg, and during the evening they promised, after sinking or capturing the *Kearsarge* on the following day, to repeat as victors the present festivity with their friends. Before going out to meet the *Kearsarge*, Captain Semmes prudently sent on shore from the *Alabama* a chest of coin and sixty-two chronometers taken from the various vessels he had captured. This property was valued at $25,000.

No extraordinary preparations were made on board the *Kearsarge* for the promised fight, as the ship was always kept in readiness for immediate action. A year before, soon after Winslow assumed command at the Azores, he had, following a device adopted by Farragut's fleet in passing the forts below New Orleans, caused his sheet-cables to be arranged outside and amidships in the wake of the boilers, for about fifty feet in length and six feet in width. To keep out the dirt these chains were covered with light boards, and after the victorious fight with the *Alabama* Semmes wrote to his government that he had found to his surprise that the *Kearsarge* "was partially ironclad." This simple expedient to protect the boilers was, of course,

equally available for the Confederate ship if Semmes had cared to adopt it.

On Sunday morning, June 19th, the decks of the *Kearsarge* were holystoned, breakfast had been eaten, inspection had passed, and at 10.20 the bell was tolling for divine service,—exactly as happened on another momentous Sunday at Santiago de Cuba on July 4th, thirty-four years later,—when a lookout hailed, "She's coming out and heading for us!" Putting aside his prayer-book and seizing the deck trumpet, Captain Winslow immediately ordered the ship about and beat to quarters.

Accompanied by the French ironclad, *Couronne*, flying the pennant of the commandant of the port, and followed by the English yacht *Deerhound*, the *Alabama* steamed out toward the *Kearsarge*, which was standing offshore, as Winslow desired to be well beyond the required marine league before joining battle with his antagonist, that no question of the violation of neutral waters might afterward be raised. When the ships were three miles offshore the *Couronne* returned to port, but the *Deerhound* continued to follow the *Alabama*, keeping at a safe distance.

At 10.50, having made an offing of seven miles, Winslow turned his ship and headed her straight for the *Alabama* at full speed, and at 10.57 the Confederate ship opened fire at eighteen hundred yards with a broadside which, beyond cutting away some of the rigging of the *Kearsarge*, did no damage. Semmes fired two more ineffectual broadsides before Winslow sheered and, delivering his broadside at nine hundred yards, endeavored to cross the *Alabama's* stern and rake her but Semmes ported his helm, and thus each ship brought her starboard broadside to bear while they

moved under a full head of steam with a circular motion around a common centre, making in this way seven complete revolutions during the engagement, while the current carried the ships steadily to the westward. The hills around Cherbourg, overlooking the English Channel, were covered with eager spectators during this marine combat, and it was estimated that fully fifteen thousand people witnessed the battle, while excursion trains ran from Paris loaded with eager passengers, and telegrams reported to the French capital the different stages of the contest. Early in the fight a shot from the *Kearsarge* carried the *Alabama's* gaff and colors, but another ensign was quickly hoisted at the mizzen. The Federal gunnery throughout the fight was vastly superior to that of the Confederates, as our people fired slowly, making nearly every shot tell. Three successive shots from the 11-inch guns entered the same port of the *Alabama*, each killing and wounding several men, and her after pivot-gun crew was reformed four times during the action. Winslow's orders were to point the heavy guns below the water-line, with the object of sinking the enemy, while the light guns were to be used for clearing the decks.

The *Alabama's* fire, on the contrary, was rapid and wild, and did little damage. One 100-pound shell, however, entered the sternpost of the *Kearsarge* and raised the transom frame, binding the rudder so hard as to require four men at the wheel. Fortunately it failed to explode. Another of these shells passed through her smoke-stack, exploding as it was going through, and tearing a ragged hole three feet in diameter. Of the twenty-eight shot that struck the *Kearsarge*, one 68-pound Blakely shell, coming through the starboard bulwark, exploded on the quarter-deck,

wounding three men, one of these, William Gowan, mortally. This brave fellow dragged himself from the after pivot-gun to the fore-hatch, unwilling to take any one from his station. When carried into the cockpit, although suffering acutely, he had a smile on his face, and exclaimed: "It is all right, and I am satisfied, for we are whipping the *Alabama*," adding, "I will willingly lose my leg, or life, if necessary." During the progress of the action he comforted his suffering comrades by assuring them that "victory is ours!" Whenever the guns' crews cheered at the successful effect of their shot, Gowan would wave his hand over his head and join in the shout, and when the shout was heard on the surrender of the *Alabama*, he insisted that the doctor should go up and join, saying he would be willing to bear a dozen such wounds to hear that cheer. The wounded man was taken to the hospital at Cherbourg, where, during intense suffering, his happy resignation attracted general attention and enlisted the sympathy of all who saw him. After his death his shipmates erected, by subscription, a monument to his memory at Cherbourg.

The effect of the active fire of the *Kearsarge* soon began to tell upon the enemy, and on the seventh rotation on the circular track the *Alabama* winded, setting her fore-trysail and two jibs, and headed inshore. This brought her port side toward the *Kearsarge* with only two guns bearing, and a few more well-placed shots brought down the Confederate flag, while in further token of surrender a white flag was displayed over the stern of the *Alabama*, and two guns were fired to leeward.

Winslow immediately suspended his fire, but, to his astonishment, within two minutes the *Alabama* again

opened from her port guns. At this the *Kearsarge* immediately steamed ahead and lay across the Confederate's bows, ready for raking, when an officer came alongside in a boat and informed Captain Winslow that the *Alabama* had surrendered and was fast sinking.

Boats were at once sent from the *Kearsarge* to save the crew of the *Alabama*, and Captain Winslow hailed the *Deerhound* to assist in the rescue of the unfortunate men. The *Alabama* sank within twenty minutes, and in the confusion of the moment the *Deerhound*, after picking up forty-one persons, including Captain Semmes, steamed off for the English coast without communicating with the *Kearsarge*, which had already received on board sixty-nine men, of whom seventeen were wounded. Twelve others were picked up by two French pilot-boats and carried into Cherbourg.

The duration of this remarkable spectacular fight was sixty-five minutes, during which the *Kearsarge* expended 173 rounds of ammunition for the different guns, while the *Alabama* fired about 370 shot and shell. The *Kearsarge* had but three wounded, one mortally. The loss of the *Alabama* was never ascertained accurately, although Semmes reported it as nine killed and twenty-one wounded. The news of the destruction of the *Alabama* was received with the greatest enthusiasm in the United States, and Congress passed suitable resolutions and a vote of thanks to the officers and men. Captain Winslow was advanced to the grade of Commodore, and Lieutenant Thornton received thirty numbers. The New York Chamber of Commerce sent a letter of thanks to Captain Winslow and his officers and crew for having "sent this pest of the ocean to her merited doom," and accompanying the letter was a

gift of $25,000 for officers and crew, $10,000 of which was assigned to the commanding officer.

The fight between the *Kearsarge* and the *Alabama* was a contest between two ships as nearly equal in size, armament, and number of crew as was possible, while the officers of each vessel had been trained in the same military school; but the *Kearsarge* had a great advantage over her antagonist in the character of her crew and in their moral quality. The *Alabama* was manned by adventurers and desperadoes of every nation, lacking discipline, and held together solely by mercenary motives. Very few of them were Americans, and those few were mainly outcasts, with no personal interest in the cause of the Confederacy, under whose flag they had enlisted as freebooters in search of adventure and gain.

But of the 163 men that fought on the deck of the *Kearsarge*, all but eleven were sturdy sons of New England—of the old Puritan stock, descendants of sires who had, mayhap, fought in these same narrow seas two hundred years before, when Blake and Deane carried the red cross of Old England in triumph through the shattered fleets of Ruyter and Van Tromp from Dunkirk to Portland Bill, or, a century later, with Paul Jones on the deck of the *Bon Homme Richard*. These fine fellows had been for two years under the immediate influence of Lieutenant Thornton, Acting Master Edward E. Preble, a grandson of Captain Edward Preble of the *Constitution*, and the other officers of the *Kearsarge*, who, by constant drill and inflexible discipline, had moulded them into a body that became an invincible fighting unit in the day of battle.

H. W. Wilson, a scholar of Trinity College, Oxford, in his *Ironclads in Action* (p. 159), well says of this case:

The whole history of naval warfare is one lesson that it is men and not ships who decide the issue, and that, given a superiority in seamen and officers on one side, that side is sure to win. The teaching of 1812 was to be repeated almost within earshot of Portland.

On July 5th, Captain Winslow, having heard that the Confederate steamer *Florida* was off the coast of France, ran up the English Channel in search of her, and, on the 23d of July, the Navy Department telegraphed him at Cherbourg to fill up with coal, and, keeping his departure a secret, to proceed at once to the southward and westward in search of the *Florida*, which was believed to be in the vicinity of Martinique. Carrying out these orders, the *Kearsarge* sailed from Dover Roads on August 11, 1864, and having received information that the *Florida* had been seen off the Banks of Newfoundland Winslow sailed to the westward, touching at Fayal on August 23d for coal. After cruising for two months without meeting the Confederate ships, Captain Winslow decided to return to the United States, the *Kearsarge* being sadly in need of repairs. On her way home she put in at St. Thomas for supplies and there found the *Wachusett*, Commander Napoleon Collins, with the Confederate steamer *Florida* as a prize, captured in the Bay of San Salvador, Brazil, on October 7th. The surgeon and sixteen of the crew of the Confederate vessel were taken on board as passengers and the *Kearsarge* proceeded to Boston, where Captain Winslow and his officers and crew were received with distinguished public honors.

After the end of the war the *Kearsarge* was thoroughly repaired at the Boston Navy Yard. In 1866, while she was on the European station, Lieutenant-Commander George Dewey was assigned to the *Kear-*

sarge as her executive officer. In 1868, she returned to Boston, and after repairs was put in commission by Commander James S. Thornton, who had been her executive officer in her fight with the *Alabama*. For the next two years the *Kearsarge* was in the Pacific squadron, and from 1871 to 1873 was repairing at Mare Island, California. From 1874 to 1877 she was in the Asiatic squadron, commanded by Commander David B. Harmony, who brought her home to Portsmouth, N. H., where she was repaired. During 1880–82 the *Kearsarge* was on the North Atlantic station, under Commanders H. E. Picking and George B. White; and from 1883 to 1886 on the European station under Commanders W. R. Bridgman and Charles D. Sigsbee. From 1887 to 1888 the *Kearsarge* was at the Portsmouth Navy Yard under repairs, and on February 10, 1894, while in command of Commander Oscar F. Hyerman, on her way from Port au Prince, Hayti, to Bluefields, Nicaragua, unfortunately ran on Roncador Reef in the Gulf of Mexico, and became a total wreck. The colors of the *Kearsarge* were recovered, and on June 19, 1894, the thirtieth anniversary of the battle between the *Kearsarge* and the *Alabama*, they were presented to a representative of the Navy Department in the New York Exchange in the presence of a large number of well-known citizens, all business being suspended for an hour for the ceremony.

John Ancrum Winslow was born in Wilmington, N. C., the 19th of November, 1811, a descendant from a brother of Governor Edward Winslow of Plymouth Colony. He entered the navy as a midshipman 10th

February, 1827, became a passed midshipman 1st of June, 1833, and was commissioned lieutenant 9th February, 1839. During the Mexican War he took part in the naval expeditions against Tabasco, Tampico, and Tuspan, and was present at the fall of Vera Cruz. For his gallantry in action he was given command of the schooner *Union*, captured at Tampico and taken into the service as the *Morris*. She was subsequently lost on a reef off Vera Cruz, 16th December, 1846. Lieutenant Winslow was executive officer of the *Saratoga* in the Gulf of Mexico in 1848–49; he was at the Boston Navy Yard in 1849–50; and in the frigate *St. Lawrence* on the Pacific station in 1851–55. He was promoted to commander, 14th September, 1855, and was ordered to the Mississippi flotilla in 1861, but was disabled by a serious accident and was unable to serve. He was commissioned captain, 16th July, 1862, and was ordered to the command of the *Kearsarge* in 1863. After the war Commodore Winslow commanded the Gulf squadron, 1866–67; was a member of the Board of Examiners, 1868–69; and, being promoted to Rear-Admiral, 2d March, 1870, was commander-in-chief of the Pacific squadron in 1870–72. After his return from the Pacific he removed to Boston, where he resided until his death, 29th September, 1873.

On March 2, 1895, Congress authorized the construction of two first-class battle-ships, the *Kentucky* and the *Kearsarge*. These sister ships were built by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company. Their keels were laid June 30, 1896, and they were launched March 24, 1898, in the presence of eighteen thousand persons, including the Governor of Virginia and his staff. The *Kearsarge* was christened by Mrs. Herbert

Winslow, wife of Lieutenant-Commander Winslow, the only surviving son of the gallant Captain Winslow who sunk the *Alabama* in 1865.

The *Kearsarge* is 368 feet long, 72 feet 2.5 inches in beam, naval displacement, 11,525 tons; mean draught, 23½ feet; 10,000 horse-power; coal capacity, 1210 tons; contract speed, 16 knots. Her armament is four 13-inch and four 8-inch breech-loading rifles; secondary battery, fourteen 5-inch rapid-fire rifles; auxiliary battery, twenty 6-pounders, four Gatling guns, and one field gun. The complement is 511 officers and men. The four guns of the main battery are mounted in two two-storied (superimposed) turrets of hardened steel of fifteen to seventeen inches in thickness, all these guns arranged to point in the same direction, if needed, thus giving a tremendous concentration of fire. The upper 8-inch guns are housed within steel walls nine inches thick and eleven inches where the guns come out of the shields. The 5-inch guns are placed behind a solid breastwork of six-inch steel, separated from each other by dividing walls of two inches of steel, to prevent bursting shells from flying about. The 6-pounders are on the berth-deck, well forward and aft, and upon the superstructure-deck above the 5-inch guns, each of these having a small shield. The 1-pounders and Gatlings are placed in the military tops.

The hull is protected by a belt 174 feet long of armor 16½ inches in thickness, which tapers to 9½ inches four feet below the water-line. Forward and aft of this midship armor the protection diminishes to 4 inches in thickness. There are two athwartship bulkheads, forward and aft, one 10 inches thick, the other 12, turning inboard from the 16½ inch armor, that terminates against the heavy barbettes which

rise, for the main battery, from the protective deck. On top of these heavy walls is a flat protective deck of steel 2¾ inches thick, which covers the engines and machinery. There is an inner belt of cellulose carried forward and aft to the ends of the ship. The two sets of engines are triple expansion, driving twin screws in separate water-tight compartments, and she has ninety auxiliary engines. The conning-tower, just below the pilot house and abaft the forward turret, is protected by ten inches of armor. The cost of the *Kearsarge* was $2,250,000.

In 1900, under Captain William M. Folger, the *Kearsarge* was the flagship of Rear-Admiral Norman H. Farquhar in the North Atlantic squadron. She was also attached to Rear-Admiral Francis J. Higginson's squadron, under command of Captain Joseph N. Hemphill, during the manœuvres on our northern coast in the summer of 1902.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CONFEDERATE NAVY

The *Sumter*

ON February 4, 1861, delegates from the six Southern States that up to that time had seceded met at Montgomery, Alabama, and adopted the Provisional Constitution of the Confederate States of America. These States in the order of their secession were: South Carolina, December 20, 1860; Mississippi, January 9, 1861; Florida, January 10th; Alabama, January 11th; Georgia, January 18th; and Louisiana, January 26th. These were followed by Texas, February 1st; Arkansas, May 6th; Tennessee, May 8th; and Virginia, June 19th.

With the secession of the seaboard States the navy yards at Norfolk and at Pensacola fell into the hands of the Confederates, and before their Congress had constituted either of the Cabinet Departments they passed a resolution, on February 14, 1861, authorizing the Committee on Naval Affairs to procure the attendance at Montgomery of all such persons versed in naval affairs as they might deem advisable to consult with. Acting upon this, telegrams were at once sent by C. M. Conrad, chairman of that Committee, to a number of

United States naval officers of Southern birth, whose sympathies were supposed to be with their States, requesting them to come to Montgomery at their earliest convenience.

Among the first officers to respond to this call was Commander Raphael Semmes, who was then at Washington, where he had been for some time on duty at the Lighthouse Board. On February 15th, Semmes resigned his commission in the United States Navy and at once reported to Jefferson Davis at Montgomery. His example was soon followed by Captains Rousseau, Tatnall, Hollins, Ingraham, and Randolph, and Commanders Farrand, Brent, and Hartstene. Commander Semmes was commissioned by President Jefferson Davis on February 21, 1861, and was directed to repair to New York to purchase arms and munitions of war.

Incredible as it may seem, after receiving his new commission Semmes returned north, stopping over at Washington to witness the inauguration of President Lincoln, and improving the occasion to visit the Navy Yard to learn what was being done there. He also examined the machinery of the arsenal and conferred with the mechanics whom he desired to send South, without interference by those in charge. Semmes then proceeded to New York to fulfil his mission in the purchase of arms. From that city he wrote to President Davis that he "found the people everywhere not only willing, but anxious to contract with him." Semmes purchased large quantities of percussion-caps in New York, and sent them to Montgomery by express without any disguise. He also made contracts for batteries of light artillery, powder, and other munitions of war in New York and in Connecticut, and succeeded in

getting large quantities of the powder shipped. It was agreed between the contractors and Commander Semmes that a certain private code should be used in telegraphing to Montgomery to avoid suspicion. Semmes actually made a contract for the removal south of a complete set of machinery for rifling cannon, with the requisite workmen to put it in operation. "Some of these men," says Captain Semmes, "who would thus have sold body and soul to me for a sufficient consideration, occupied high social positions and were men of wealth," but Semmes never revealed their names.

Under the act passed February 21, 1861, President Davis appointed, as Secretary of the Confederate Navy, Hon. Stephen Mallory, who had just resigned his seat as Senator from Florida, and who had been chairman of the Naval Committee of Congress. The new Secretary found himself on the eve of a great war with a number of naval officers at his disposal, but until after the capture of the Norfolk Navy Yard, in the following April, he had neither ships, men, nor ordnance.

Secretary Mallory was fully aware of the importance of the possession of sea-power in the approaching conflict, and of the pre-eminence of the Northern States over the Confederacy in that direction. Spencer Wilkinson, in his *War and Policy*, p. 34, after referring to the fact that the whole South by its peculiar social system was almost a ready-made army—a military machine easily put together and in the hands of an almost absolute President, experienced as a soldier and a military organizer—goes on to say, with great truth:

> One weapon, however the North possessed which the South had not—a navy. Not a ship nor a man went over

to the Confederates, though a good many officers passed from one service to the other. The decisive factor in the war, the explanation of the collapse of the South, was the possession of a navy by the North and the lack of a navy on the part of the Confederacy.

To remedy their deficiency in ships, on March 17, 1861, Secretary Mallory ordered Commanders L. Rousseau and E. Farrand to New Orleans to purchase or contract for constructing ten steam gunboats for coast defence, authorized by the Confederate Congress, and under these orders the *Sumter*, the first Confederate cruiser, was despatched to sea. The Commission found at New Orleans two merchant steamers, the *Habana*, and the *Marquis de la Habana*, both of which they purchased in April, the first becoming the *Sumter*, the second the *McRae*. On April 22d, Commander Semmes took command of the *Sumter* with the following officers: Lieutenants, John M. Kell, R. T. Chapman, John M. Stribling, and William E. Evans; Paymaster, Henry Myers; Surgeon, Francis L. Galt; Midshipmen, W. A. Hicks, R. F. Armstrong, A. G. Hudgins, J. F. Holden, and J. D. Wilson; First Lieutenant of Marines, B. K. Howell. The *Sumter* was of 437 tons register, 184 feet long, 30 feet beam, and barkantine rigged. Her speed was from nine to ten knots, and she could stow only coal enough for eight days' steaming. Her battery was one 8-inch shell pivot-gun and four 24's in broadside. The instructions given Commander Semmes were to "do the enemy's commerce the greatest injury in the shortest time."

By the 1st of June, 1861, Semmes was ready for sea, and the *Sumter* ran down to the Head of the Passes of the Mississippi to await a chance to escape the vigilance of the Union blockaders. It was not until June

30th, however, that an opportunity was presented, when the *Brooklyn*, having gone off to the southward in pursuit of a strange sail, the *Sumter* dashed out of Pass à l'Outre and was well over the bar before she was discovered. The *Brooklyn* at once started in chase, keeping up her pursuit until four o'clock in the afternoon when, finding that the *Sumter* was running away from her, she abandoned the chase and returned to her station, and the first Confederate vessel of war had commenced a cruise that, although brief, was to be very notable, both from the direct injury inflicted upon our commerce and for the moral effect produced by the daring raid.

On July 3d, the *Sumter* captured and burned the bark *Golden Rocket* of Maine. A few days later she captured the brigantines *Cuba* and *Machias*, and, shortly after, the *Sumter* took into Cienfuegos six prizes, but was refused permission by the Cuban authorities to leave them there to await the decision of a Confederate Court of Admiralty, and these vessels were subsequently delivered up to their original owners.

Semmes sailed from Cuba for the Spanish Main, going as far south as Maranham, Brazil, and then made for Martinique, during these fifty-five days taking a number of prizes, which he burned. On November 13th, the *Sumter* went in to St. Pierre for coal, and while there the United States steamship *Iroquois*, Commander James S. Palmer, arrived. Captain Palmer protested to the Governor of Martinique against "a vessel engaged in pirating upon the commerce of the United States" being permitted to coal "under the protection of the French flag and with the immunities of a French port," and requested that she be required to leave the port, but the Governor "would not refuse

an anchorage to a vessel belonging to the States of the South," diplomatically tendering the same hospitalities to the *Iroquois*. Captain Palmer went to sea, after having arranged with the captain of the American schooner *Windward* in the harbor to notify him by signal if the *Sumter* sailed.

After nine days of this blockade, Semmes went to sea on the night of October 23d. He had learned that the *Windward* was to burn two lights if the *Sumter* steered south and one light if she steered north. Accordingly, he steered south until the two lights were shown, and then ran close inshore, under the shadows of the mountains that came down to the sea. As the *Iroquois* went off south under a full head of steam, Semmes doubled and stood to the northward, thus shrewdly escaping from his enemy. The *Sumter* was now kept to the eastward, and off the island of Dominica the ship *Montmorencie*, with a cargo of coal on English account was captured and bonded for $20,000. Three other prizes were also taken during the run across the Atlantic.

On January 4, 1862, the *Sumter* anchored in the harbor of Cadiz, Spain, and the next day Semmes received a peremptory order to proceed to sea within twenty-four hours. To this Commander Semmes replied that his ship was crippled; that he had forty-three prisoners on board that he desired to hand over to the United States Consul; and that he claimed the same hospitality as was accorded vessels of the United States Navy.

After an exchange of several communications, orders came from Madrid to permit the prisoners to be landed and the *Sumter* to be taken to Carracca, eight miles east of Cadiz, for such repairs as would suffice to keep her afloat. This was done, and on January 17th

Semmes received a peremptory order to leave Carracca within six hours. On his way over to Gibraltar the *Sumter* made two prizes, arriving there, January 19, 1862.

At Gibraltar the authorities closed the market for coal to the *Sumter*, and, as the ship was immediately blockaded by the United States ships *Tuscarora*, *Kearsarge*, and *Ino*, Semmes, after consultation with Mr. Mason, the Confederate envoy at London, decided, as it was impossible to escape, to lay the *Sumter* up and pay off her crew. This was done, and so ended a cruise of six months, in which time eighteen vessels had been captured, of which eight were burned and the others released or bonded.

On April 13th, Commander Semmes started for London, whence he soon sailed for Nassau, intending to take passage in a blockade-runner for the Confederacy, but at Nassau he received orders to return to England and take command of the *Alabama*.

Later in the war the *Sumter* was sold at Gibraltar under process of law for charges against her for stores furnished by tradesmen, and being purchased by British merchants she was fitted out under another name as a blockade-runner, and made one or two successful voyages.

CHAPTER XIX

THE "ALABAMA"

IN June, 1861, Captain J. D. Bullock, naval agent of the Confederate States, closed negotiations with Messrs. Laird & Co., of the Birkenhead Shipyards, opposite Liverpool, for the building of a small steam sloop-of-war on a model he provided, at the price of £47,500. The ship was laid down as "No. 290," and while she was building, our Minister, Mr. Adams, protested earnestly to the British government against her construction as an evident breach of neutrality, but, notwithstanding all his efforts, the vessel was completed, and on July 29, 1862, she steamed hurriedly out of the Mersey without her armament, a few hours before the British Foreign Office sent down orders to detain her. To give color to the pretence that this was merely a trial trip, a large party of ladies and gentlemen were taken on board, who were sent back to Liverpool from Anglesea, the *Alabama* keeping on her way down-channel.

On August 6th, she arrived at Terceira in the Azores, where she was joined by the bark *Agrippina* with her armament and stores, and a day or two later the steamer *Bahama* came in with her officers and crew. By August 24th, armament, stores, and crew had been transferred to the "290," and Captain Raphael Semmes

hoisted his flag and put her in commission as the Confederate States cruiser *Alabama*. The officers were: Captain, Raphael Semmes; First Lieutenant, J. M. Kell; Lieutenants, R. F. Armstrong, J. D. Wilson, Arthur Sinclair, and John Lowe, with a long list of midshipmen and engineers. The *Alabama* was of 1040 tons, 220 feet long, and 32 feet beam. She was barkantine rigged, with an armament of six 32-pounders in broadside, a 100-pounder Blakely rifle on the forecastle, and an 8-inch-shell gun abaft the mainmast. She had a speed of ten knots under sail, or eleven and a half knots under sail and steam.

The *Alabama* made her *début* as a commerce-destroyer off Fayal, capturing twelve whalers in those waters before she was headed for the Newfoundland Banks in search of larger prey. On October 3d she burned the ship *Brilliant*, laden with wheat, and the next day she captured the *Emily Farnum* with a British cargo on board, and, bonding her, sent her to New York, where upon her arrival she brought the news that Semmes was again on the war-path near our shores. Between October 3d and 21st, the *Alabama* made sixteen captures, and then, before the naval vessels that had been despatched in haste could reach the Banks, she bore away to the southward and put in to Port de France, Martinique.

The United States frigate *San Jacinto* made her appearance off Martinique while the *Alabama* was there, but Semmes slipped out of port and escaped from his slower enemy, making for the Spanish Main. At Blanquilla, Venezuela, the *Alabama* coaled from a tender and then sailed for the West Indies, lying in wait between San Domingo and Hayti for one of the California treasure steamers bound from Colon to New

York. On December 7, 1862, she captured the steamship *Ariel*, outward bound from New York with five hundred passengers, but, after taking $9500 in cash from her safe, Semmes released her under a bond for $261,000, payable after the recognition of the independence of the Confederate States.

The *Alabama* next ran into the Gulf of Mexico and appeared off Galveston on January 11, 1863. Semmes had learned from newspapers found on board the *Ariel* of the expedition General Banks was about to send from New Orleans against Galveston, and he hoped to be able to pick up some of the transports. The blockading squadron, under command of Commodore Henry H. Bell, included the *Brooklyn*, *Hatteras*, Lieutenant-Commander Homer C. Blake; *Cayuga*, *Sciota*, and several of the smaller vessels. About noon the masthead lookout of the *Brooklyn* reported a three-masted schooner or a bark making for the port. As the *Brooklyn* was having new grate-bars put in and had no steam, the Commodore signalled the *Hatteras*, a small side-wheel, purchased steamer, to run off to investigate the stranger. Captain Blake started, and the strange vessel was seen to be making sail as if to escape. By 8.30 P.M., when fully twenty miles from the fleet, Semmes slowed down, and Blake, coming within hail, asked, "What ship is that?" The reply was, "Her Britannic Majesty's ship *Petrel*." "I will send a boat on board you," replied Blake, and, as he lowered his boat, Semmes, who had been manœuvring to obtain a raking position, hailed, "This is the Confederate States steamer *Alabama*," and immediately poured in a broadside.

Although the *Hatteras* was seriously injured by the first broadside she responded vigorously, and Captain

Blake endeavored to close, with a view of boarding, but Semmes steamed ahead and crossed the bows of the *Hatteras,* raking her, and then taking a position on the other side. The fire of the *Alabama* was very accurate, and the *Hatteras* soon had her walking-beam shot away, while she was repeatedly hulled and was on fire in several places. This unequal combat continued for thirteen minutes, when Captain Blake, finding that his vessel was sinking, was reluctantly compelled to surrender and ask for assistance. Within fifteen minutes the *Hatteras* went bow first to the bottom, just as the last man was transferred from her to the *Alabama.* In this engagement the *Hatteras* had two killed, while the *Alabama* had but one wounded. The Confederate ship at once made for Jamaica, where the prisoners were paroled and landed at Port Royal.

The noise of the battle brought the Union fleet out at once, but they cruised all night without finding the *Hatteras* or the mysterious stranger. The next morning, however, the masts of a sunken vessel were found with the tops awash, which proved to be the unfortunate *Hatteras.*

On January 25th, the *Alabama* sailed from Kingston for a cruise on the coast of Brazil, during which she destroyed twenty-three vessels, and converted one, the *Conrad,* into a cruiser, which Semmes renamed the *Tuscaloosa.* He then ran over to the coast of Africa with the *Tuscaloosa,* capturing two more prizes; and, on July 28, 1863, the *Alabama* put into Saldanha Bay after taking the bark *Sea Bride,* which vessel, with her cargo, he sold to an English merchant at Angra Pequena. During the remainder of the year the *Alabama* cruised in the Straits of Sunda, the China Sea, and the Bay of Bengal, but as American ships were now nearly all

sailing under British colors, few captures were made. Tiring at last of this monotonous and profitless work, Semmes ran over to the Brazil coast, where he made two prizes; the ship *Tycoon*, taken April 27, 1864, being the last of the *Alabama's* victims.

By great good fortune the *Alabama* had thus far eluded all the various ships-of-war sent in pursuit of her, but the pitcher that goes once too often to the well may haply be broken, and Semmes had now expended his luck. On June 11, 1864, the Confederate ship came to anchor in the port of Cherbourg, France, and on Sunday morning, June 12th, Captain John Ancrum Winslow, of the United States steamship *Kearsarge*, received a telegram at Flushing from Mr. Dayton, our Minister to France, informing him that the *Alabama* was at Cherbourg. Hurriedly getting his liberty men on board, Captain Winslow got under way and, steaming to Dover for despatches, appeared off Cherbourg on Tuesday, the fourteenth.

Semmes determined to fight the *Kearsarge*, as the two ships were very equally matched, and, after making every preparation through the week, he steamed out of the harbor on Sunday, the 19th of June, at 10.20 A.M.

The French ironclad *Couronne* and the English yacht *Deerhound* accompanied the *Alabama* from the harbor, keeping out of the line of fire after the action commenced. Just before the battle began, Captain Semmes called all hands aft and, mounting a gun-carriage, said:

Officers and seamen of the *Alabama:* You have at length another opportunity of meeting the enemy—the first that has been presented to you since you sank the *Hatteras!* In the meantime, you have been all over the world, and it is

not too much to say that you have destroyed and driven for protection under neutral flags one half of the enemy's commerce, which at the beginning of the war covered every sea. This is an achievement of which you may well be proud, and a grateful country will not be unmindful of it. The name of your ship has become a household word wherever civilization extends! Shall that name be tarnished by defeat? The thing is impossible! Remember that you are in the English Channel, the theatre of so much of the naval glory of our race, and that the eyes of all Europe are upon you. The flag that floats over you is that of a young republic which bids defiance to her enemies whenever and wherever found! Show the world that you know how to uphold it! Go to your quarters.

The *Kearsarge*, to avoid any question of fighting in neutral waters, stood out to sea until she was fully seven miles from land, when, at 10.50 A.M., she turned, and at a distance of one mile from each other the combat was opened by the *Alabama*, to which the *Kearsarge* almost immediately responded. The two ships, steaming around in a common centre at a distance from each other of about eighteen hundred yards, now engaged with their starboard batteries with great vigor; gradually reducing the distance to about nine hundred yards, and at the close of the action to less than six hundred yards.

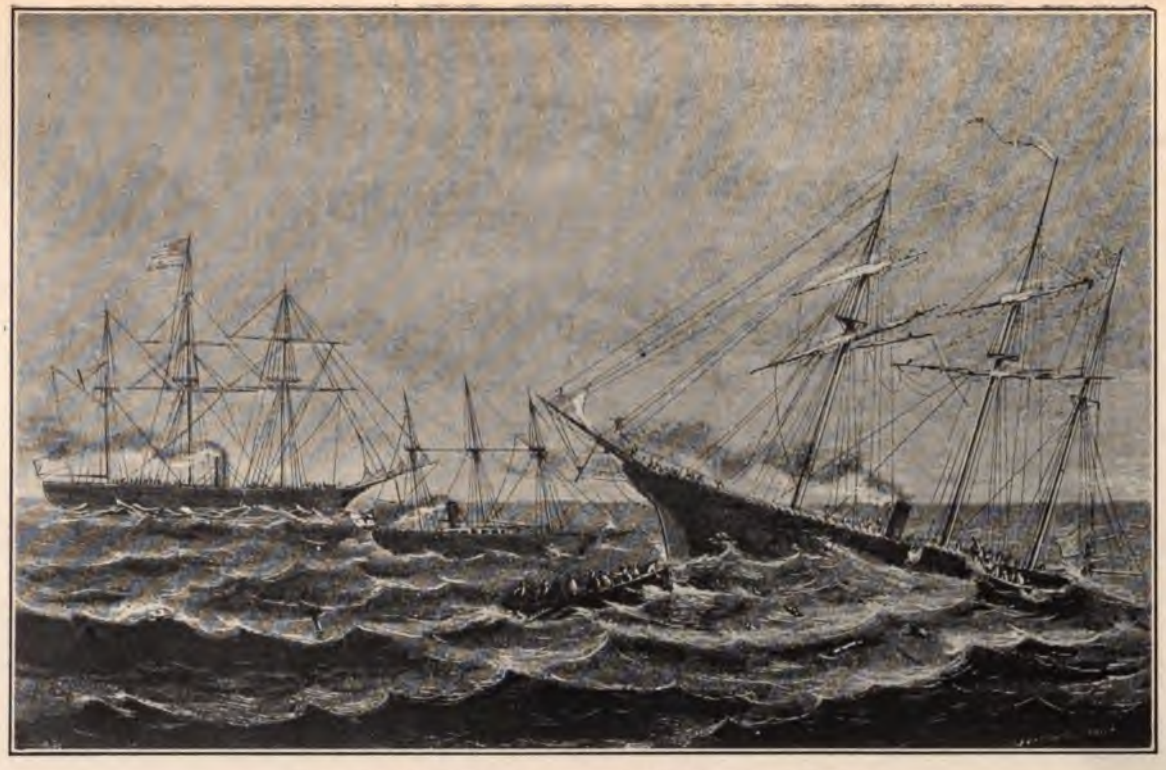
Early in the action a shot from the *Kearsarge* carried away the *Alabama's* gaff and colors, but the flag was at once hoisted at the mizzenmast head. Although the *Alabama* had a well-trained crew, the proficiency of the *Kearsarge's* gunnery was very notable, and her two 11-inch pivot-guns were admirably served. One of these shells, entering the port of the *Alabama's* 8-inch gun, swept a portion of the crew away; another entered

the same port, killing one man and wounding several, while a third shell quickly followed in the same place. Another shell entered the wardroom and, sweeping away the table on which Assistant-Surgeon Llewellyn was operating, entered the opposite side of the ship and, exploding, blew a hole through the ship.

Observing that the after pivot-gun of the *Kearsarge* was doing so much injury to his vessel, Captain Semmes offered a reward to any gun's crew that would silence it. The *Alabama's* battery was accordingly turned on the well-served pivot-gun of the enemy, but without avail, for it continued pouring in its deadly fire with admirable precision.

At twelve o'clock the *Alabama* was so seriously cut up that Captain Semmes made sail, and with the aid of steam endeavored to run inshore, sending First Lieutenant Kell below to ascertain the condition of the ship. Kell soon returned and reported that she could not float ten minutes. "Then, sir, cease firing, shorten sail, and haul down the colors," said Semmes. Meanwhile, Captain Winslow steered across the bow of the Confederate and was just about to pour in a raking fire, when the *Alabama's* colors were hauled down, and a boat was despatched with Master's Mate Fullam and a few of the slightly wounded to inform Captain Winslow of her sinking condition. Boats were at once sent from the *Kearsarge*, and as the *Deerhound* approached she was requested by Captain Winslow to assist in saving the men.

At this moment the *Alabama* settled by the stern and went to the bottom. Her crew jumped overboard to save their lives and were all picked up, forty-two by the *Deerhound*, including Semmes and fourteen officers, and the others by the *Kearsarge* and a French pilot-



THE "KEARSARGE" SINKING THE "ALABAMA" OFF CHERBOURG

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boat. Captain Winslow had expected that those saved by the yacht would be placed on board the *Kearsarge*, but the *Deerhound* gradually edged away, and then, under full steam, ran for Southampton, where Semmes and his officers and men were landed. Minister Adams made a formal request that these men be given up, but the British government declined, claiming that it could not do so consistently with international law. Captain Semmes reported his loss to Commodore Samuel Barron, at Paris, as nine killed and twenty-one wounded.

Captain Semmes was landed from the *Deerhound* at Southampton, and he soon afterward went up to London, where he was lionized by those of the English who sympathized with the South, and was presented with swords and *fêted* as though he had come from a victorious fight. Semmes soon sailed for Mexico, and, returning to the Confederacy, was made Rear-Admiral and placed in command of the squadron operating on the James River.

After the capitulation of Richmond, Semmes made his way to Greensboro, N. C., where he was one of those who capitulated with General Johnston's army. He then returned to Mobile and opened a law office, and on December 15, 1865, he was arrested by order of Secretary Welles and imprisoned as a traitor who had avoided trial by his escape after the destruction of the *Alabama*. He was, however, subsequently released, under the third of the President's amnesty proclamations, and was soon after elected a judge of the probate court of Mobile County, but an order from President Johnson forbade him to exercise the functions of the office. Semmes then became editor of a daily paper in Mobile, and subsequently wrote an

account of his cruise in two books entitled, *The Cruise of the "Alabama" and "Sumter"* (1864); *Memoirs of Service Afloat During the War Between the States* (1869). He died in Mobile, Alabama, August 30, 1877.

J. T. Scharf, the historian of the Confederate navy, in summing up the operations of the Confederate cruisers and privateers during the Civil War, gives a list of 258 vessels captured and either bonded or destroyed. These vessels aggregated one hundred thousand tons and represented a value of twelve to fifteen million dollars.

As an offset to this, the Federal vessels captured 1149 blockade-runners, beside six rams and ironclads. In addition there were 1504 vessels burned and wrecked. The total value of these vessels was $46,329,543.

The second *Alabama* is a first-class battle-ship of 11,565 tons displacement. Her keel was laid at the shipyard of Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia, December 2, 1896, and she was launched May 18, 1898. She is 368 feet long, with a maximum beam of 72 feet, 2.5 inches, a freeboard of 19½ feet forward and 13½ feet aft, and a mean draught of 23 feet. The *Alabama* has twin screws, driven by two sets of powerful triple-expansion engines of 11,366 independent horse-power. The coal capacity is 1200 tons, and the ship has a speed of 17.013 knots.

Her main battery is four 13-inch breech-loading rifles in two turrets, protected by fifteen inches of Harveyized steel, and fourteen 6-inch rapid-fire guns in casemates behind six inches of steel armor. Four of these are in two heavily armored citadels amidships. The fire of the four 13-inch guns can be concentrated upon a point about sixty feet off the beam on either side. Each hardened steel shot weighs 1100 pounds, and has

an impulse of 33.627-foot tons. Her complement is 490 men.

Protection to the hull is provided by a seven-and-a-half-foot water-line belt, half under water at normal draught, which reaches from abreast the after turret forward to the stem. This steel armor tapers from sixteen and a half to four inches in thickness. Above the water-line the sides are reinforced by five and a half inches of steel reaching to the upper deck. There are several 12-inch hardened steel compartment bulkheads athwartships.

The *Alabama* was commissioned by Captain Willard H. Brownson at League Island, Penna., October 16, 1900, and she was the flagship of Rear-Admiral Francis J. Higginson in the North Atlantic squadron in the summer of 1902, during the interesting *Kriegspiel* between the Blue and White squadrons, when the New England coast was successfully defended against the attack of an imaginary enemy.

CHAPTER XX

THE "MERRIMAC"

THE first *Merrimac* in our service was a ship purchased at Newburyport in 1798 by the Committee of which Paul Jones was a member. She cost, when refitted, $46,170. She was of 530 tons (a large ship for that period) and was rated as a twenty-four, but probably carried more guns; her complement was 230 officers and men. Commanded by Captain M. Brown, the *Merrimac* cruised in the Atlantic and West Indies during the French War, in the squadrons of Commodores John Barry and Stephen Decatur. She captured the armed brigs *Le Magicien*, fourteen guns, sixty-three men; *Le Phénix*, fourteen, 128 men; and the schooners *Le Bonaparte* and *Brilliante*. At the close of the war she was sold at Boston for $21,154.

The steam frigate *Merrimac*, built at the Charlestown Navy Yard in 1855, was of 3500 tons, 275 feet long, and mounted forty guns. She was a superb ship of her class, a sister to the *Minnesota* and *Roanoke*, with which vessels her future history under the Confederate flag was to be closely linked. She had been the flagship of the Pacific squadron from 1856 to 1859, when she returned to the Norfolk Navy Yard and went out of commission.

In view of the peculiar condition of the country and

of the events that had already transpired, Secretary Welles sent a confidential communication to Captain C. S. McCauley, Commandant of the Norfolk Navy Yard, on April 10, 1861, requesting him to have the *Merrimac* quietly prepared for sea, and on the eleventh the Secretary ordered Commander James Alden to proceed to Norfolk, assume command of the *Merrimac*, and bring her to Philadelphia for repairs. Engineer-in-Chief B. F. Isherwood was also ordered to report at once at the Norfolk Yard to assist in having the *Merrimac* removed to Philadelphia with the utmost despatch, and men were sent from New York to man and assist in moving the ship. On April 16th, Captain McCauley wrote to the Department that all that was necessary to be done to the *Merrimac* would be completed by the evening of the seventeenth.

On that day, Mr. Isherwood, having completed the necessary repairs, started fires under the boilers, and, at 2 P.M., reported to Captain McCauley that the ship was ready to leave the yard. To his great surprise he was informed that the Commandant had not yet decided to send the vessel to sea, and he was directed to draw the fires. On the eighteenth, Commodore Hiram Paulding was ordered to proceed immediately to Norfolk and take command of all the naval forces there afloat, relieving Captain McCauley, and, if necessary, repelling force by force in carrying out his instructions. Several officers and 250 men from the New York Navy Yard were ordered the same day to proceed at once to Norfolk, "well armed"; and the United States ship *Pawnee*, with one hundred marines "for immediate service," was ordered to sail without delay for Norfolk.

At eight o'clock on the evening of April 20th, Commodore Paulding reached the Norfolk Navy Yard in

the *Pawnee*, prepared to remove the United States vessels there to a place of safety, but to his surprise found that the *Merrimac*, *Delaware*, *Columbus*, *Dolphin*, *Germantown*, and *Plymouth* had all been scuttled two hours before his arrival, by order of Captain McCauley, to prevent them, as he explained, from falling into the hands of the Confederates, who were then besieging the yard.

Under the circumstances, after towing the *Cumberland* into the stream, Commodore Paulding felt it his duty to destroy the Government property as best he could to prevent it from falling into the hands of the enemy. Parties were accordingly sent to various parts of the yard, the ship-houses, shops, rigging-lofts, and the vessels were fired, the guns spiked, and an ineffectual attempt was made to blow up the granite dry dock.

And thus, owing to the lamentable indecision of a loyal officer who weakly yielded to the advice of the disaffected officers by whom he was surrounded, the United States frigate *Merrimac* fell into the hands of the Confederates, and, subsequently, in one of the most momentous conflicts in naval history, brought grave disaster to our arms.

On April 25th, the Confederates removed the battery from the *Merrimac* and despatched the guns to Sewall's Point, for the defence of Norfolk, and, on May 30th, the ship was raised and taken into the dry dock.

Early in June, Lieutenant John M. Brooke, C.S.N., was directed to aid the Navy Department in designing an ironclad vessel and framing the necessary specifications. On June 24th, a report was made to the Department by Chief Engineer William P. Williamson, Lieutenant John M. Brooke, and Naval Constructor

John L. Porter, recommending that the *Merrimac* be taken for the purpose, and the work of transforming the frigate into an ironclad battery was at once begun by cutting her down to the old berth-deck, to within three and a half feet of her light water-line. Both ends of the hull for seventy feet were planked over, and on the midship section, for 170 feet, was erected, at an angle of forty-five degrees, a roof of pitch-pine and oak twenty-four inches thick, extending from the water-line to a height over the gun-deck of seven feet. Both ends of this shielded roof were rounded, so that the pivot-guns could be used as bow- and stern-chasers or quartering. Over the gun-deck was placed a light grating, making a promenade about twenty feet wide and nearly 170 feet long.

The wood backing was covered with two layers of two-inch iron plating, rolled at the Tredegar Iron Works at Richmond. The under layer was placed horizontally and the upper course up and down, and both were bolted through the woodwork and clinched inside. The ship was also provided with a cast-iron prow or ram, weighing fifteen hundred pounds, which projected four feet. The pilot-house, which was forward of the smoke-stack, was also covered with four inches of iron. The armament of the *Virginia*, as she had been officially renamed, consisted of two 7-inch rifled guns heavily reinforced around the breech with 3-inch steel bands shrunk on; these were the bow- and stern-chasers; in broadside were two 6-inch rifled guns and six 9-inch Dahlgren guns, making ten in all. Her draught was twenty-two feet.

To the command of this novel and untried warship Captain Franklin Buchanan was ordered on February 24, 1862, with Lieutenant Catesby Ap R. Jones as

executive officer, and a full complement of officers and three hundred men.

In Captain Buchanan's orders Secretary Mallory says:

> The *Virginia* is a novelty in naval construction, is untried, and her powers unknown, and the department will not give specific orders as to her attack upon the enemy. Her powers as a ram are regarded as very formidable, and it is hoped that you may be able to test them. . . . Could you pass Old Point and make a dashing cruise on the Potomac as far as Washington, its effect upon the public mind would be important to the cause. . . . Action—prompt and successful action—now would be of serious importance to our cause.

On Saturday, March 8th, discharging the last of the workmen as she moved out into the channel, the *Virginia*, or the *Merrimac* as we shall call her in this work, steamed slowly down Elizabeth River at eleven o'clock, accompanied by the tugs *Beaufort* and *Raleigh*, amid the cheers of citizens and soldiers assembled on the wharfs and batteries. It was an unusually bright spring morning, and the Federal fleet was lying at Newport News in the peaceful security that seemed assured by the 74 powerful guns of the *Congress* and the *Cumberland;* while but twelve miles away, at Fortress Monroe, lay the *Minnesota*, 54, *Roanoke*, 40, the *St. Lawrence*, 50, the *Brandywine*, 50, and a dozen smaller craft, each carrying a few guns. So little idea had these vessels of being attacked that their wash-clothes were flying from the rigging and their boats were moored to their lower booms, and it was not until the *Merrimac* was within three quarters of a mile of them that the ships were cleared for action.

By an unfortunate chance the commanding officer of the *Cumberland*, Commander William Radford, was attending a court-martial on board the *Roanoke*, leaving Lieutenant George Upham Morris in charge of the ship. Commander William Smith of the *Congress* had been detached from his command, and his executive officer, Lieutenant Joseph B. Smith, was in charge, but, upon seeing the *Merrimac* coming out, Commander William Smith offered his services and fought as a volunteer during the action that transpired. The Paymaster of the *Congress*, Mr. McKean Buchanan, was the brother of Captain Franklin Buchanan of the *Merrimac*.

Reaching Sewall's Point, Captain Buchanan turned the *Merrimac* toward Newport News. In passing the *Congress* at 2.30 P.M., at a distance of two hundred yards, the *Merrimac* gave her a broadside with deadly effect, and in turn received the fire of the frigate, which was harmless to the ironclad. She then bore down upon the *Cumberland*, striking her at right angles, under the starboard fore-channels, and, as she backed out, delivering the fire of her bow pivot-gun. The iron prow crashed through the side of the *Cumberland*, while ten men were killed at gun No. 1. In backing out, the *Merrimac* left her iron prow in the side of her enemy. As the *Merrimac* rounded to, she raked her opponent with her broadside guns, killing and wounding sixteen men at gun No. 10. Heading up-stream to turn, the *Merrimac* then brought her after pivot to bear upon the *Congress*, just as she slipped her anchor and was making sail, and raked her three times. Lieutenant Smith, with the aid of the gunboat *Zouave*, ran the *Congress* ashore, where the water was too shoal to permit the *Merrimac* to ram her. Captain Buchanan then took up a position at a distance of about one hundred

and fifty yards and proceeded to rake the *Cumberland* at his leisure, while the gunboats *Raleigh* and *Beaufort* also poured in a heavy fire on the doomed ship.

In response to a demand for surrender, Lieutenant Morris answered, "Never! I'll sink alongside!" As the combat continued, the slaughter on board the *Cumberland* was awful; more than one hundred were soon killed or wounded, and the decks were lumbered with the dead and dying, yet her guns were fired as rapidly as they could be loaded, until the water had reached the gun-deck. Then only was the order given for every one to save himself, and as the men sprang overboard the good ship careened and went down, the ensign at the peak being dragged beneath the water, while the flags at the mastheads remained flying a few feet above the sea as the *Cumberland* settled upon the bottom.

The *Merrimac* now turned her attention to the *Congress*, and for a full hour Lieutenant Pendergrast, who came into command after Lieutenant Smith was killed, fought his ship with his two stern guns,—the only ones that could be brought to bear,—until they were both disabled. Just before these guns were rendered useless, the powder ran short, and, finding none was sent up, the officer in charge went to discover the reason.

> After my eyes had become a little accustomed to the darkness [he writes] and the sharp smoke from the burning oak, I saw that the line of cooks and wardroom servants, stationed to pass full boxes, had been raked by a shell, and every one of them had either been killed or wounded.

For an hour the *Congress* endured the terrific fire of the *Merrimac* and her consorts, until, at 4.40 P.M., the ship being on fire in several places, Lieutenant Pender-

grast lowered his colors and displayed a white flag, and the *Beaufort* and *Raleigh* ran alongside to take off the prisoners and burn the ship. The shore batteries, not aware of the situation, now opened fire upon the Confederate steamers and compelled them to haul off with only thirty prisoners, and the crew of the *Congress* then endeavored to escape by swimming or in boats. Observing this, the *Merrimac* opened upon the ship with hot shot and she was soon in flames. About this time both Captain Buchanan and his flag-lieutanant, Minor, were wounded by rifle-balls from the shore, and the command of the *Merrimac* devolved upon Lieutenant Jones.

While this desperate fight had been going on, the *Minnesota*, *Roanoke*, and *St. Lawrence*, which had been lying seven miles below at Fortress Monroe, had got under way and, aided by tugboats, were making for the scene of battle. But while yet a mile and a half from Newport News the *Minnesota* grounded in the North Channel, undoubtedly through the treachery of her pilot, and soon after both the other ships took the bottom.

At five o'clock the *Merrimac* steamed toward the *Minnesota*, but the tide was then so low that the ram could not get within a mile of the frigate. At this long range the fire of the Confederate ship was not effective, but one shot striking the frigate. The light-draught steamers, however, were able to approach nearer and their fire was very annoying, while the *Minnesota* could only bring her single stern-chaser to bear upon her opponents. This fire was kept up for about an hour and a half, the frigate being struck by sixteen shells, which inflicted serious damage, although, fortunately, none of the crew were injured.

By seven o'clock it had become so dark that the pilots of the *Merrimac* refused to keep her longer in her position, and Captain Buchanan, after signalling his consorts to withdraw, steamed back to Sewall's Point in triumph.

In the entire history of the American Navy there has been no such record of disaster as is shown in this unfortunate day's work. A frigate and a sloop-of-war destroyed, with 250 officers and men killed or drowned, while three other frigates were stranded or huddled under the guns of Fortress Monroe, and all this destruction practically accomplished by one ship, which retired for the night uninjured, with but two men killed and eight wounded!

The news of this eventful contest, at once telegraphed from Richmond throughout the Confederate States, was received with the wildest rejoicings, and the most sanguine hopes were entertained that the Federal blockade of the Southern ports would be raised and the independence of the Confederate States recognized by France and England. Carried away by the excitement of the great news, Secretary Mallory at once wrote to Captain Buchanan as follows:

SIR: I submit for your consideration the attack of New York by the *Virginia*. Can the *Virginia* steam to New York and attack and burn the city? She can, I doubt not, pass Old Point safely, and in good weather with a smooth sea could doubtless go to New York. Once in the bay she could shell and burn the city and the shipping. Such an event would eclipse all the glories of the combats of the sea, would place every man in it pre-eminently high, and would strike a blow from which the enemy could never recover. Peace would inevitably follow. Bankers would withdraw their capital from the city. The Brooklyn Navy Yard and

its magazines and all the lower part of the city would be destroyed, and such an event, by a single ship, would do more to achieve our immediate independence than would the results of many campaigns. Can the ship go there? Please give me your views.

As a matter of fact, the *Merrimac* was no seagoing ship: her engines, even in smooth water, could not move her more than five knots, and she was not weatherly enough to manœuvre, even in Hampton Roads, at all times with safety.

The report of the day's fight cast a dense gloom over the North, and the excitement in Washington was intense. President Lincoln called a special meeting of the Cabinet, and it was even suggested that the military operations on the Peninsula must be abandoned to defend the capital from an anticipated attack upon the city by the way of the Potomac. The dreaded *Merrimac* was expected at any moment in the river before Washington, and the citizens of New York were equally alarmed for the safety of their city while the ironclad monster was at large.

General McClellan seemed to share in the general alarm. At one o'clock on the afternoon of March 9th —as it chanced at the very time the *Merrimac* was withdrawing from her ineffectual contest with the *Monitor*—McClellan telegraphed to Major-General John E. Wool:

If the rebels obtain full command of the water, it would seem impossible for you to hold Newport News. You are therefore authorized to evacuate that place, drawing the garrison in upon Fort Monroe, which, I need not say to so brave an officer, is to be held at all hazards, as I will risk everything to sustain you should you be attacked by superior forces. . . . The performances of the *Merrimac*

place a new aspect upon everything. I may very probably change my whole plan of campaign just on the eve of evacuation.

Arrangements were also made for sinking sixteen canal-boats, laden with stone, in the Potomac at various points to prevent the passage of the *Merrimac* up the river to Washington.

Secretary Stanton was another pessimist. In describing the Cabinet meeting called by President Lincoln, Gideon Welles, in his book, *Lincoln and Seward*, writes:

Mr. Stanton said: "The *Merrimac* will change the whole character of the war; she will destroy, *seriatim*, every naval vessel; she will lay all the vessels on the seaboard under contribution. I shall immediately recall Burnside; Port Royal must be abandoned. I will notify the governors and municipal authorities in the North to take instant measures to protect their harbors. I have no doubt that the monster is at this minute on her way to Washington, and"—looking out of the window which commanded a view of the Potomac for many miles—"not unlikely we shall have a shell or a cannon-ball from one of her guns in the White House before we leave the room."

The depression pervading the Union forces the night of March 8th was naturally very great, for it was fully believed that the morrow would bring a renewal of the sad experience of the past day. At midnight, however, a new ally arrived in Hampton Roads in the shape of the *Monitor*, an ironclad to be sure, but of such insignificant size and strange appearance that grave doubt was expressed, by the Federal officers and men who saw the little vessel, of her ability to cope with the formidable enemy that had wrought such havoc among our fleet the previous day. But Lieutenant Worden and

his gallant officers had every confidence in the fighting qualities of their craft, albeit she was as yet untried.

As day broke on Sunday morning, March 9, 1862, the masts of the *Cumberland*, just awash above the waters of the bay, and the shattered wreck of the *Congress* were evidence of the desperate character of the previous day's fight. In the north channel, hard and fast aground, lay the *Minnesota*, her sides well riddled, while close beside her lay the strange newcomer—"like a cheese-box on a raft." Nearer, toward Fortress Monroe, were the *Roanoke*, the *St. Lawrence*, and the smaller Federal gunboats. Off Sewall's Point, in plain sight, grim and defiant, was the *Merrimac*, and clustered about her the consorts *Patrick Henry*, *Jamestown*, *Raleigh*, and *Teaser*.

At 7.45 o'clock the *Merrimac*, under command of Lieutenant Catesby Ap R. Jones, steamed slowly down toward the middle ground, heading directly for the *Minnesota*. At eight o'clock, while yet a mile away, she fired her bow pivot, the shot striking the *Minnesota's* counter. As though accepting the challenge, the *Monitor* at once steamed out and headed directly for the *Merrimac*, firing with deliberation at intervals of seven or eight minutes, the Confederate ship responding with much greater frequency.

To the intense satisfaction of the Federals, who crowded the decks of the ships and the adjacent shores, it was soon seen that the turret of the *Monitor* was at least invulnerable to the *Merrimac's* shell, and a feeling of relief and confidence at once replaced their previous anxiety. It also became evident that the *Monitor* handled more readily than the *Merrimac*, and was vastly her superior in manœuvring. After two hours of ineffectually giving and taking hard blows at close

quarters neither vessel was seriously damaged, and Lieutenant Jones determined to try the effect of ramming his doughty little antagonist, but the blow proved absolutely harmless, the *Monitor* easily eluding her clumsy antagonist.

Finding that his fire was producing no visible effect upon his enemy, Lieutenant Worden now made a dash for the *Merrimac's* stern, hoping to disable her rudder or propeller. The blow missed by about three feet, but, as the *Monitor* grazed the *Merrimac's* quarter, Lieutenant Greene discharged both his guns at the same time. The two solid 11-inch shot struck squarely upon the armored sides of the *Merrimac* nearly in the same place, about half-way up the casemate, the force of the impact crushing in the plating two or three inches, while the concussion knocked over three of the crew of the after guns, causing many of them to bleed at the nose and ears.

By twelve o'clock, after four hours of continuous firing, with no particular damage inflicted upon either of the combatants, the *Monitor* and *Merrimac* separated, the former taking up a position to cover the *Minnesota*, while the *Merrimac*, which was leaking badly, accompanied by her consorts, withdrew, first to Sewall's Point and later to the dock-yard at Norfolk. Both crews were exhausted, and both commanders temporarily disabled. The *Merrimac* had two killed and nineteen wounded in the two-days fight, her stem had been twisted by the blow that sunk the *Cumberland*, and she leaked considerably, the steam-pipe and smoke-stack were both riddled, the muzzles of the two guns were shot away, and the starboard anchor and all her boats were lost.

Upon her arrival at Norfolk the *Merrimac* was

docked, the lost prow was replaced by one of steel and wrought-iron, and a course of two-inch iron was placed on the hull below the roof, extending 180 feet in length. The damage to the armor was repaired, wrought-iron port shutters were fitted, and the rifled guns were supplied with bolts of wrought and chilled iron. By these changes the ship was brought a foot deeper in the water, making her draught twenty-three feet.

Commodore Josiah Tatnall now relieved Admiral Buchanan in command of the *Merrimac*, and, the repairs being completed, Tatnall took her down to Hampton Roads on April 11th, accompanied by the gunboats *Jamestown* and *Raleigh*. After reaching the middle ground the *Jamestown* was sent in and captured two merchant brigs and a schooner which had grounded near Beach's Landing.

Commodore Goldsborough had a fleet of twenty-five vessels, beside the *Monitor*, assembled in the Roads, including the *Vanderbilt*, and his plan was to inveigle the *Merrimac* well down and then set upon her with his fleet and mob her to death, the *Monitor* and the Stevens Battery being held in reserve in the event of this scheme failing. Commodore Tatnall, however, understood Goldsborough's tactics, and he did not give him an opportunity to put them in practice, but later in the afternoon returned with the *Merrimac* to his moorings above Craney Island.

On May 8th, the *Monitor* and several other vessels bombarded the Confederate batteries at Sewall's Point, and the *Merrimac* dropped down from Norfolk, but did not engage. On May 10th, the Confederate authorities decided to evacuate Norfolk, and, as her draught prevented taking her up James River, the *Merrimac* was run on shore in the bight of Craney Island, the

crew was landed, and the ship was set on fire. The magazine exploded at half-past four on the morning of May 11, 1862, and thus ended the brief but very eventful career of the first Confederate ironclad—a ship whose successful achievement in her first day's fight revolutionized the navies of the world!

CHAPTER XXI

THE "ARKANSAS"

AN Act of the Confederate Congress of August 24, 1861, included a clause, "for the construction, equipment, and armament of two ironclad gunboats for the defence of the Mississippi River and the city of Memphis, $160,000." On the same day, Secretary Mallory entered into a contract with John T. Shirley of Memphis to construct two vessels of the character provided in the plans and specifications of the Department, and one of these two vessels when completed was the formidable ironclad ram *Arkansas*. Her companion, the *Tennessee*, was burned on the stocks of Memphis to prevent her from falling into the hands of the Union fleet.

The pine timber for these vessels was brought a distance of 104 miles by railroad to Memphis, while the oak timber was prepared at five saw-mills, ten to twenty miles from the city. The iron was purchased in small lots in Memphis and in Arkansas, and the bolts and spikes were rolled on the Cumberland River. The contract called for the completion of the vessels in four months from August 24, 1861; but in consequence of the difficulty in obtaining carpenters and ironworkers,—nearly all these men having been conscripted

into the army,—the *Arkansas* was fully seven months in building.

The passage of Columbus and Island No. 10 by Captain Foote's fleet opened the way for his ships to Memphis, where the Confederates had been pursuing their work of shipbuilding in fancied security, while the passage of Farragut's victorious fleet past the forts below New Orleans in April, 1862, placed the uncompleted Confederate ironclads between two active enemies. Imperative orders from Richmond were accordingly issued to Captain Hollins to destroy the *Tennessee* as a military necessity, and to remove the *Arkansas* up the Yazoo River for completion.

This was done with all speed, and in April the *Arkansas* was towed up the Yazoo, while the railroad iron for her casemate and the steam machinery for drilling it were sent up in barges. One of these boats, with four hundred bars of drilled iron, was sunk in the passage of the Yazoo, causing a delay of weeks before the barge could be raised. The *Arkansas* was finally towed up to Yazoo City, and for her protection from attack by the enemy a boom raft was constructed across the river below the city, which was defended by batteries.

On May 26, 1862, Lieutenant Isaac N. Brown, C.S.N., was ordered to command the *Arkansas* and "to finish the vessel without regard to expenditure of men or money." Lieutenant Brown had been twenty-seven years in the United States Navy when he resigned in 1861 to enter the Confederate service, and he was at New Orleans, superintending the construction of four ironclad gunboats at the Algiers yard, when the arrival of Farragut's fleet on April 25th before that city compelled him to destroy these vessels and make the best of his way up the river to Vicksburg.

Lieutenant Brown's unfortunate experience at New Orleans had taught him the necessity of expedition in carrying out his orders, and he soon had two hundred carpenters and fourteen forges employed on the *Arkansas*. This force was divided into day and night shifts, so that work on the ram was continuous.

The model of the *Arkansas* was a combination of the flat-bottomed Mississippi river-boats and the keel-built sea steamers. She was of twelve hundred tons, her cutwater was a sharp solid beak of iron, sixteen feet in length, covering the bow ten feet and bolted through solid timber eight feet. Her stern tapered, but for about eighty feet amidships her hull was nearly eighty feet beam. She was 180 feet over all, her engines were low pressure, and her two propellers acted independently. She was provided with steam hose to repel boarders, which was then a novelty. The iron mail was one thickness of T railway iron, running horizontally and laid over heavy oak bulwarks with cotton-pressed casemating. Her wheel was within the shield, but the pilot-house was raised two feet above the shield deck. The top of this shield was flat, covered with one-inch iron bars. The ram drew about fourteen feet of water, and had a speed of six knots in still water. Her battery was four 64- and two 32-pounders, rifled, and two 8- and two 9-inch shell guns. The officers of the *Arkansas* had every confidence in her ability to cope with any vessel in the United States Navy.

On the 13th of July, the rapidly receding waters of the Yazoo warned Captain Brown that he must move his vessel down the river and across Satartia bar if he expected to use her that season. He accordingly prepared to change his position, and at once despatched one of his officers, Lieut. C. W. Read, to Vicksburg to

obtain instructions from the military authorities and also to reconnoitre the position of the Federal fleet above Vicksburg. Lieutenant Read reached General Van Dorn's headquarters the next day, and from the heights of Vicksburg counted thirty-seven vessels of the combined fleets of Farragut and Davis at anchor five miles above the city, almost immediately opposite the point where the Yazoo empties into the Mississippi.

Lieutenant Read returned to his ship with orders from General Van Dorn for Captain Brown to come out of the Yazoo and bring his vessel under the guns of the Vicksburg batteries. Accordingly, Brown at once dropped the *Arkansas* down to Haines Bluff, some twelve miles from the Mississippi, where he anchored soon after midnight on July 14th.

That night some Confederate deserters came out of the Yazoo, bringing information to Flag-Officers Farragut and Davis that the *Arkansas* was completed and was preparing to come out to attack the Federal fleet. Similar stories had been heard from contrabands and deserters for some little time, but they were believed to be exaggerations, as it did not seem in the least probable that any one vessel would dare to venture out to what would seem must be certain capture or destruction by the formidable array of river ironclads and rams constituting Captain Davis's fleet, joined to Farragut's ships that had so lately come up the river as victors from New Orleans. As it proved, however, this was another case of underrating the skill, courage, and resource of an enemy.

However, after consulting with Farragut, Captain Davis decided to despatch the *Carondelet*, Captain Henry Walke, the army ram *Queen of the West*, and the wooden steamer *Tyler*, Lieutenant-Commander

William Gwin, on a reconnaissance up the Yazoo, "to procure correct information concerning the obstructions and defences of the river, and to ascertain, if possible, the whereabouts of the ram *Arkansas*."

In the light of coming events there was a wealth of unconscious sarcasm in the last ten words of this paragraph of Captain Davis's orders.

Soon after daylight on the morning of July 15th, Captain Brown lifted his anchor and, after sinking an old steamer in the opening of the obstructions in the river above him, proceeded down the Yazoo, hoping to enter the Mississippi when unexpected and at such a early hour as to enable him to pass the Federal fleet with the swift current and gain the protection of the Vicksburg batteries without serious opposition. But, in turning his ship, the *Arkansas* ran aground and lost much valuable time.

Meanwhile, Captain Walke, with his two vessels, was feeling his way up the Yazoo, all unconscious of what was awaiting him. As that officer says in his *Naval Scenes*, p. 304:

> All was calm, bright, and beautiful. The majestic forest echoed with the sweet warbling of its wild birds, and its dewy leaves sparkled in the sunbeams. All seemed inviting the mind to peaceful reflection and to stimulate it with hopes of future happiness at home.

Just as the first rays of the morning sun were gilding the waters of the Yazoo, the Confederate ram, coming down the river at full speed, was sighted by the *Queen of the West*, which was about two miles ahead of the *Carondelet*, with the *Tyler* about one mile astern.

This entirely unexpected turn of events, by which the hunters suddenly found themselves hunted by a

formidable enemy, was by no manner of means calculated "to invite the mind to peaceful reflection," nor "to stimulate it to hopes of future happiness at home," as Captain Walke poetically expresses it. As a prosaic matter of fact, the *Tyler* at once gave the alarm and retreated, followed by the *Queen of the West*, which made the best of her way down the Yazoo and into the Mississippi, blowing her steam-whistle and never pausing for "peaceful reflections" until she had run into the middle of the Federal fleet and found cover under the lee of the *Richmond*, of which ship the present writer was officer of the deck that fateful morning.

The *Carondelet* fired her bow guns at short range at the *Arkansas*, then turned down-stream, accompanied by the *Tyler*, both vessels keeping up a fire upon the *Arkansas* from their stern guns at a distance of from fifty to five hundred yards. A vigorous running fight was thus kept up over the twelve miles to the Mississippi. Thirteen shot went through the *Carondelet*, she received serious injuries in her hull and machinery, while her wheel-ropes were shot away three times, and she suffered a loss of thirty, killed, wounded, and missing. When the escape-pipes were shot away several of her crew jumped overboard and were drowned. Before reaching the Mississippi the *Carondelet* grounded on the river-bank, and the *Arkansas* passed her, receiving and delivering a broadside fire. The *Tyler* also suffered considerably. She was struck by fourteen shot, one of these cutting the escape-pipe and filling her berth-deck with steam. She had on board a detachment of sharpshooters from the 4th Wisconsin Regiment, of whom eight were killed and sixteen wounded.

The *Arkansas*, for her part, did not escape unscathed.

Her chief pilot, John Hodges, was mortally wounded at the wheel, and the wheel was partly shot away. Captain Brown received a severe contusion on the top of his head and soon after was struck by a Minie ball which grazed his left temple, causing him to fall insensible through the hatchway to the gun-deck. One of the crew had his head cut off by a cannon-ball, and several were wounded. Later, in passing the fleet, two 11-inch solid shot crushed through the side of the ram, killing ten and wounding twenty men, while her smoke, stack was riddled and much of the iron plating on the port side was loosened by the force of the projectiles striking it.

As the *Arkansas* emerged from the Yazoo at 7.30 o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, July 15th, she became the object of attack from the entire Federal fleet, although none of the vessels were able to move, as they were at anchor with banked fires; but all of them opened fire with their starboard batteries as the ram approached, closely hugging the Mississippi shore, and defiantly returning their fire as she passed down the river.

It was by a piece of extraordinary good fortune that the Confederate ram found the Union fleet in this condition of helpless immobility. If the ships had been able to move, the *Arkansas* could not possibly have escaped capture or destruction, and, as it was, if the army rams had done their duty on this occasion as pluckily as they did in the fight at Memphis the incident would have ended very differently. The Federal loss in this unfortunate affair was, in all, forty-two killed and sixty-nine wounded.

At 8.50 o'clock that morning the *Arkansas* ran alongside the wharf-boat at Vicksburg, where she was

she was not vitally injured. The *Queen* then backed off and repeated the blow, but without effect, while, for her part, she suffered severely from the Confederate fire which was concentrated upon her. Her tall smoke-stacks were riddled, one of her steam-pipes was carried away, while her hull was perforated several times, and she was leaking badly. His vessel had been struck twenty-five times before the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel Ellet withdrew, and, steaming boldly up-stream past the batteries, rejoined the upper fleet.

A force of workmen was at once put on board the *Arkansas*, the injuries she had received were speedily repaired, and, on July 23d, Commander Brown got up steam and started to move up-stream to show that the *Arkansas* was uninjured, and, in defiance, to attempt to drive the Federal mortar-boats away; but her starboard engine soon became disabled, and it was with difficulty that the ram was brought back to her moorings again.

Farragut's fleet soon after went down the river, and the Union troops under General Williams were withdrawn from before Vicksburg and sent to strengthen the force at Baton Rouge, while Commodore Davis's flotilla returned to Helena. Major-General Earl Van Dorn, having determined to attempt the surprise and capture of Baton Rouge, ordered General Breckenridge to move rapidly upon that place, while the *Arkansas* was directed to co-operate with the land forces by attacking the Federal fleet stationed off that city.

Commander Brown, having obtained a furlough while the repairs were being made to his ship, was with his family at Grenada, Miss., seriously ill, when General Van Dorn issued these orders. Brown immediately wrote to his executive officer, Lieut. H. K. Stevens,

not to move the *Arkansas* until he could join her, and started at once for Vicksburg, although unable to sit up. To his great mortification he learned upon reaching Jackson that the *Arkansas* had left Vicksburg four hours before, under peremptory orders from Capt. W. F. Lynde, the senior officer of the Confederate navy in the West.

Meanwhile, the *Arkansas* steamed leisurely down the river from Vicksburg and reached a point fifteen miles above Baton Rouge, when her starboard engine broke down. Repairs were at once begun, and by eight o'clock she started; but as she rounded the point above Baton Rouge the same engine gave way again and the ram drifted ashore on the Arkansas side of the river. During the night repairs were made, and at eight o'clock the next morning, as the ship moved out from the bank, the *Essex* was seen steaming up the river.

The *Arkansas* had made but a few revolutions of her engines toward the *Essex*, when they broke down for the fourth time, and Lieutenant Stevens, finding his vessel unmanageable, ran her on the bank and ordered his crew ashore, setting his vessel on fire in several places before abandoning her. The *Essex* steamed up and fired several broadsides into the wreck, until at last fire reached the magazine and the *Arkansas* was blown into the air.

Commander William D. Porter claimed that a shell from the *Essex* exploded the magazine of the *Arkansas*. Admiral David D. Porter says in his report:

The *Arkansas* was soon set on fire and totally destroyed —whether from the shells of the *Essex* or by the Confederates to escape capture, is not known. The Confederates claim that one of her engines was disabled, and that she was

destroyed by them; but be that as it may, her destruction was due to the presence of the Essex and her two consorts.

Admiral Farragut also says, in *Life and Letters*, p. 289: "Although Bill Porter did not destroy her, he was the cause, and thought his shells did the work; for they (the Confederates) would hardly have destroyed her unless he made the attack. I insist that Porter is entitled to the credit of it."

The second *Arkansas*, a powerful monitor for harbor defence, was built by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, her keel being laid November 14, 1899, and she was launched November 18, 1900, making her trial trip August 6, 1902. Her cost was $900,000. The *Arkansas* is 252 feet long on the water-line, with a maximum beam of 50 feet; a displacement of 3235 tons, and draws only 12½ feet. She is fitted with a powerful ram, and, lying low in the water, her hull is cased with steel armor, ranging from five to twelve inches in thickness. Her main armament is two 12-inch breech-loading rifles in a turret of hardened steel eleven inches in thickness. There are also four 4-inch rapid-fire guns mounted on the corners of the superstructure, and a number of smaller rapid-fire guns to repel torpedo-boats mounted on the superstrucure and in the fighting top.

The *Arkansas* has twin screws and two triple-expansion engines, each having four water-tube boilers working at a high pressure of 250 pounds, which should give the ship a speed of twelve knots in smooth water. For harbor defence the *Arkansas*, acting in connection with shore batteries, will doubtless serve a good purpose.

CHAPTER XXII

THE "TENNESSEE"

THE vigorous effort of the Confederates to construct ironclad vessels for their infant navy was no less remarkable than the marvellous ill-fortune that befell these vessels as rapidly as they were completed. In the whole area of the Southern Confederacy in 1861 there were but five ironworks, of which but one had machinery for rolling iron plates. Iron was so scarce in the South that it soon reached a price of $1300 a ton, and old rails and scrap iron were eagerly sought for the manufacture of armor, while from first to last no plates were made in the South thicker than three inches. Artisans were also very scarce, as the active conscription had drawn them all into the army, yet, as a matter of fact, the Confederate Government was far ahead of the United States in preparations for the construction of ironclads in the first years of the war.

As early as May 20, 1861, Captain Duncan N. Ingraham of the Confederate Navy, in charge of naval affairs in the waters of Alabama, was ordered to ascertain the practicability of obtaining wrought-iron plates of from two to three inches in thickness, and the price per pound of such plates. After investigation Captain Ingraham reported that none of the existing ironworks

in the South could furnish such plates. Yet, the following July, work was in progress at the captured Norfolk Navy Yard in covering the sides of the frigate *Merrimac* with railroad iron.

The ironclad *Merrimac*, but for the opportune appearance of the *Monitor* at the very hour of gravest peril, would undoubtedly have completed the destruction of the Union fleet she had so sorely shattered in Hampton Roads on the previous day. Yet her course was run in two days' fight, and, a scant month later, the formidable ship was blown up to prevent her from falling into the hands of the Federals.

At New Orleans the Confederates had completed the ironclad *Louisiana*, when Farragut appeared in the river. She was a powerful vessel, 260 feet long and 58 feet in beam. Her bottom was twenty-two inches thick before plating with five hundred tons of three-inch railroad iron. She had three propellers and mounted sixteen guns. There was certainly no vessel in Farragut's fleet that could have withstood her attack. Yet she never got into action, and, without striking a blow against the enemy, was set on fire and blown up by her officers during the negotiations for the surrender of Forts Jackson and St. Philip to Captain Porter after the passage of those forts by Farragut's fleet.

The *Mississippi*, another monstrous ironclad battery, intended for sea service, was of four thousand tons, with four engines. Her sides were plated with four inches of iron. She was to have mounted sixteen guns, and was expected to steam eleven knots. Commodore Hollins stated before a committee of the Confederate Congress that "she was the greatest vessel in the world." Yet she was burned at Algiers, La., six

days after launching, to prevent her from falling into Farragut's hands.

The *Arkansas* was also a very formidable ironclad ram that passed practically unscathed through the fire of the Union fleet of forty vessels at Vicksburg, and later withstood two assaults of their ironclads and rams, yet she was also destroyed by her commander on the eve of battle with the *Essex*, a vessel that was really her inferior in strength.

The *Albemarle*, a powerful casemate ironclad, after sinking the United States ship *Southfield* and forcing the *Miami* to retreat in the first day's fight, and disabling the *Sassacus* on the second day, was blown up and sunk by Lieutenant William B. Cushing in a most daring and successful expedition a few months later.

The *Columbia*, 216 feet long and 51 feet beam, plated with six inches of iron and mounting eight guns, was sunk and abandoned at Charleston, when that city was evacuated upon the appearance of General Sherman in its rear in February, 1865. This vessel was subsequently hauled off the rocks near Fort Moultrie by the Federals and sent north.

The *Stonewall*, a powerful ironclad ram, built at Bordeaux, France, and armed with one 300-pounder and two 70-pounder Armstrong guns, crossed the ocean and reached Havana, only to find the war ended. She was accordingly surrendered to the Spanish authorities, and was subsequently delivered to the United States Government, never having fired a gun against an enemy.

Of twenty ironclad vessels flying the Confederate flag not one escaped capture or destruction within a very few months after their completion. The fates

certainly seemed combined against the success of the Confederates upon the ocean.

One of the most formidable of the various fighting machines constructed by the Confederate Government was the ironclad *Tennessee*—the second of her name, the first having been burned on the stocks at Memphis to prevent her from falling into the hands of Captain Charles Henry Davis in 1862. The *Tennessee* was built at Selma, Ala., in the winter of 1863–64, and although, when her keel was laid, much of the timber to be used in her construction was still standing in the adjoining forests, and a part of the material of her plating had not yet been taken from the mines, she was practically finished in March, 1864, when Commander J. D. Johnston was assigned to her command.

The *Tennessee* was 209 feet long, her beam was 48 feet, and she drew from fourteen to fifteen feet of water when ready for action. Like the *Merrimac*, she carried her battery amidships in a casemate, 78 × 29 feet, which rose eight feet above the deck and sloped at an angle of forty-five degrees. This was protected, first, by two and a half inches of oak, then by vertical beams of yellow pine thirteen inches thick, over which were five and a half inches of pine and four of oak. Upon this mass of timber were two courses of two-inch iron plating, over which was another layer of one-inch thickness on the sides and stern, while forward this course was two inches thick. This made from five to six inches of well-rolled, tough iron, vastly superior to the usual Confederate plating. The pilot-house, projecting two feet above the forward end of the casemate, was covered with a grating of two inches of armor. The hull was protected from rams by a solid knuckle formed by prolonging the slope of the

casemate two feet below the water-line and then inclining it to meet the hull. Upon this timber projection four inches of iron were superimposed.

There were ten gun-ports, three on each side, two forward, and two aft. These closed by sliding iron shutters five inches thick. The battery was one 7.12-inch 110-pounder rifle, pivoted, forward and another aft, while in broadside were four 6.4-inch 95-pounder rifles. The defects of the ship were the exposure of her rudder chains, which were carried outside in full view; her port-shutters were liable to jam, and, as was the case with all the Confederate ironclads, her engines were insufficient, so that she made only six knots when armed and equipped.

In bringing the ship down to Mobile great difficulty was experienced in floating her over Dog River bar, where there was but nine feet of water at high tide. This was finally accomplished by the use of caissons, which lifted the ship five feet, and she was thus brought safely to Mobile on May 18th, and, all ready for action, the *Tennessee* steamed down to the lower bay and hoisted Admiral Franklin Buchanan's flag in full sight of Farragut's fleet, which had long been expecting her arrival.

Buchanan had fully intended going out that night and giving the Union fleet a brush, but, by a mischance, the *Tennessee* grounded and the raid was abandoned and never undertaken.

The ironclad was officered by Admiral Franklin Buchanan; Captain James D. Johnston; Lieutenants Wm. L. Bradford, A. D. Wharton, E. G. McDermott; Masters J. R. Molry and H. W. Perrin, with a full complement of engineer and petty officers and a crew of 110 men.

It was nearly three months after the arrival of the *Tennessee* in Mobile Bay before the opportunity came for the only test she ever received in battle. On the morning of August 5, 1864, Farragut's superb fleet of four monitors and fourteen wooden ships, carrying in all 160 heavy guns, steamed dauntlessly into Mobile Bay in the face of the Confederate forts, ships-of-war, and lines of deadly torpedoes.

As the head of the Federal line came within the fire of Fort Morgan, Buchanan signalled his four ships to prepare for action and they stood across the channel just inside the line of torpedoes, their heads pointing to the westward, with their port batteries ready to rake the line of the advancing enemy. Before going into action Admiral Buchanan assembled his officers and men upon the *Tennessee's* gun-deck and said:

> Now, men, the enemy is coming and I want you to do your duty; and you shall not have it to say when you leave this vessel that you were not near enough to the enemy, for I will meet them and then you can fight them alongside their own ships: and if I fall lay me on one side and go on with the fight, and never mind me—but whip and sink the Yankees or fight until you sink yourselves, but do not surrender.

Buchanan placed his own ship nearest to the channel with the object of meeting the *Tecumseh*, which was armed with 15-inch guns. By 7.15 A.M. the action had become general, but Buchanan reserved his fire, keeping his eye on the *Tecumseh* as she approached his ship. "Don't fire until we are in actual contact," said the Admiral to Lieutenant Wharton of the first division. "Aye, aye, sir," he responded, tautening the lockstring of the bow gun in his fingers as he spoke. The *Ten-*

nessee was just then moved a short distance to the westward of the buoy at the end of the torpedo line, and Captain Craven, disregarding Farragut's order to keep to the eastward of this buoy, put his helm hard astarboard and dashed straight at the *Tennessee*, his course taking him directly across the line of torpedoes. In an instant, when the two ironclads were less than a hundred yards apart, a muffled explosion was heard, a column of water like a fountain shot up beside the *Tecumseh*, she lurched violently, her head settled, her stern went up in the air so that her revolving screw could be plainly seen, and then she went down, leaving of all her crew of 141 souls but fourteen men swimming for their lives, while two officers and five men had climbed into a boat washed from her deck.

In the face of this awful catastrophe there was for a moment a pause in the battle, while the few survivors were picked up by a boat from the *Metacomet*, but it was only for a moment; for the Federal line, led by Farragut, who had dashed to the front in the *Hartford*, was pressing on and there was ample work for all that day. The *Selma*, *Gaines*, and *Morgan*, obeying the signal to "close with the enemy," ran down close to the *Hartford* as she crossed the torpedo line, and, keeping ahead of her at a distance of from seven to nine hundred yards, poured in a very galling fire upon the flagship. One shot from the *Selma* killed ten and wounded five men at her forward guns, while the splinters from the forecastle were thrown over on to the *Metacomet*, lashed alongside the *Hartford*.

Buchanan now made a dash at Farragut's flagship, but, by her greater speed, she easily avoided the *Tennessee*, while she ineffectually poured in the fire of her battery upon the Confederate ironclad. As the

Hartford forged ahead, Buchanan turned down toward the other approaching ships and endeavored in turn to ram the *Brooklyn*, *Richmond*, and *Lackawanna*, but each ship sheered and avoided his blow, although they could not escape his broadsides.

The *Monongahela*, which had an iron prow, came out full speed at the *Tennessee* in an endeavor to ram the Confederate ship; but Buchanan, avoiding the direct blow, received it on his port quarter, and, as he rubbed along the quarter of the *Monongahela's* consort, the *Kennebec*, he lodged a shell in her berth-deck which killed and wounded an officer and four men. The *Tennessee* next put a couple of shots into the *Ossipee* and then raked the *Oneida*, disabling two of her guns and cutting off the arm of her captain, Commander Mullany. Having thus engaged ten of the enemy's ships without receiving any injury himself, Buchanan ran under the guns of Fort Morgan to give his men badly needed rest.

During this time the Union gunboats had been cast loose from their consorts and had gone in chase of the *Selma*, *Morgan*, and *Gaines*. The latter was so severely handled that she was run on shore in front of Fort Morgan and was set on fire by her crew, while the *Selma* was overtaken by the *Metacomet* and surrendered. The *Morgan* escaped and ran up to Mobile.

The *Tennessee* was now left absolutely alone, unsupported by consorts, to contend with a victorious fleet of seventeen vessels, three of them ironclads, projecting nearly fourteen thousand pounds of metal in one round against something less than six hundred pounds from the *Tennessee*. But the iron will and sublime courage of Buchanan was as yet undaunted, and shortly after nine o'clock the Admiral said to his captain, "We will follow them up, Johnston; we can't let them off that

way." The crews of the Union ships were still at breakfast when the Confederate flagship steamed out from under cover of Fort Morgan and laid her course directly for the *Hartford*.

Farragut signalled to his ships to attack with bows at full speed, and the *Monongahela* was the first ship to strike the *Tennessee* on the port beam, and, although the blow was partially deflected, the shock threw many men from their feet on the Confederate ship. At the moment of impact Buchanan planted two shells in the berth-deck of his enemy, wounding an officer and two men; the *Monongahela* responded with a broadside that was harmless to her ironclad opponent. The *Lackawanna* followed, with a tremendous blow that stove in her own stem for several feet below the water-line, while it swung the *Tennessee* around to port, and a shot fired at the same time smashed one of the gun-port shutters of the ironclad. It was also found that these two blows had started a leak in the Confederate ship, which was making water at the rate of six inches an hour.

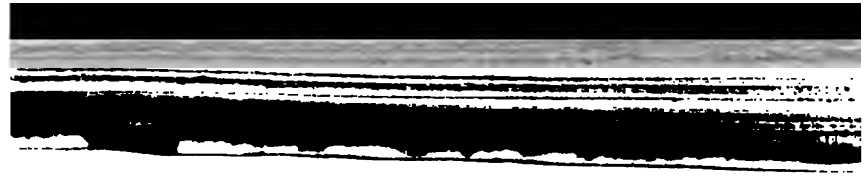
As the second ship drew off, the *Tennessee* and the *Hartford* struck each other in the bluff of the bow, and the two ships exchanged broadsides, several men being killed and wounded on board the *Hartford*. The monitors were now coming into action and the ill-fated *Tennessee* was soon close beset by the *Manhattan*, *Winnebago*, and *Chickasaw*. The latter, obtaining a position under the Confederate's stern, hung on like a leech, driving in her enemy's plates with blows from 11-inch shot, riddling her smoke-stack, and finally cutting away her rudder chains. The *Winnebago's* 15-inch bolts were also telling with deadly effect, one of them striking the *Tennessee's* shield just outside where a man was leaning

against the side while backing out a jammed pivot-pin from a port-shutter on the berth-deck. The concussion shivered him into pieces that were shovelled up into buckets. The same shot started an iron splinter that struck Admiral Buchanan and fractured his leg, so that he was carried below, and the command of the *Tennessee* then devolved upon Captain Johnston.

The *Tennessee* was now entirely at the mercy of her enemies, who were slowly but surely hammering her to death. She had but three guns available, her berth-deck was rendered almost useless by the smoke that filled it since the smoke-stack had been broken off by shot, her steering-gear was destroyed, she was steadily making water, and she could not extricate herself from the grasp of the three monitors by which she was surrounded. In short, the ironclad was little better than a floating hulk when Captain Johnston reported to Admiral Buchanan that further resistance was useless. From his bed Buchanan replied, "Do the best you can, Johnston; and when all is done, surrender."

Captain Johnston returned to the pilot-house and found that while his ship was encircled by the enemy, who were pouring in a steady fire, the *Tennessee* had not been able to fire a gun for a quarter of an hour, and the wooden ships were now preparing to renew their ramming. Deciding that further resistance was useless Captain Johnston first hauled down the ensign, and then, fastening a white flag to a boat-hook, he climbed out on the casemate at ten o'clock, exposed to a perfect rain of projectiles, and exhibited the sign of surrender. As he did this the *Ossipee* was coming down at full speed to ram the *Tennessee*, and although Commander Le Roy backed his engines and shifted his helm, he could not altogether avoid the unintentional blow to the surrendered ship.

THE LATE CONFEDERATE IRONCLAD "TENNESSEE"
From a photograph taken off Algiers, La., in 1864
(Courtesy of Rear Admiral N. Mayo Dyer, U. S. N., Retired)



Learning that Admiral Buchanan was wounded, Admiral Farragut at once sent Fleet-Surgeon Palmer to care for him, and Captain Johnston made the formal surrender of the *Tennessee* to Commander Le Roy of the *Ossipee*, although Buchanan's sword was sent to Farragut by the hands of Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Pierre Giraud. Farragut soon after sent a flag of truce to General Page at Fort Morgan, requesting him to allow a vessel to pass out with Admiral Buchanan and the other wounded on board, and these were sent in the *Metacomet* to the naval hospital at Pensacola for treatment. The loss on the *Tennessee* and the three Confederate gunboats was twelve killed and twenty wounded.

Admiral Buchanan recovered from the effects of his wound and was held a prisoner of war until February, 1865, when he was exchanged. He died in Talbot County, Md., May 11, 1874.

The report on the condition of the *Tennessee* by the Board of Survey, ordered by Farragut, showed that there were between forty and fifty indentations and marks of shot on the hull, deck, and casemate, varying from severe to slight. Nearly all the plating on the after side was started, several bolts and nuts were driven in, the gun-carriage of the after pivot-gun was damaged and the steering-chain cut near that gun, several gun-port slides were injured, and her smokestack was cut off at the deck. The Board added: "When these repairs are made the ironclad *Tennessee* will be a most formidable vessel for harbor or river service and for operating generally in smooth water, both offensively and defensively."

On the 23d of August, the *Tennessee* was taken in with the Federal fleet to the combined attack upon

Fort Morgan, which surrendered to General Granger and Admiral Farragut the same day.

That autumn the *Tennessee* was sent around to New Orleans for repairs, and she was subsequently taken into the United States service and assigned to the Mississippi squadron. She remained laid up at New Orleans, after the termination of the Civil War, until 1867, when she was condemned, sold, and broken up for old iron.

Among the few vessels that escaped destruction at New Orleans by the Confederates, when Farragut's victorious fleet appeared before that city on April 25, 1862, was the side-wheel steamer *Tennessee*. She had been a merchant vessel before the war, and, being shut in by the Federal blockade of the Mississippi River, had been laid up at the levee for more than a year when New Orleans came into our hands. The present writer was sent by Captain James Alden with a boat's crew from the *Richmond* on April 26, 1862, to take possession of the *Tennessee*, and she was later taken into our service by Farragut and used as a despatch-boat under command of Volunteer Lieutenant F. Stanhope Hill, and, after his detachment to the Mississippi squadron, by Volunteer Lieutenant Pierre Giraud. After the Confederate ironclad *Tennessee* was captured and taken into our service, this wooden steamer, *Tennessee*, was renamed the *Mobile*, and at the end of the Civil War she was sold out of the service, November 22, 1867.

The third *Tennessee* was built at New York in 1870. She was a first-rate screw steamer with 4840 tons displacement and an armament of twenty-three guns.

In 1871, she made a short cruise, under command of Capt. W. G. Temple, and was then laid up at New York until the summer of 1875, when she went to

sea in command of Captain William W. Low, as the flagship of the Asiatic squadron, under the flag of Rear-Admiral William Reynolds. In 1877, Captain Jonathan Young relieved Captain Low and brought her to New York in 1878, where she was laid up for repairs.

From 1880 to 1886, the *Tennessee* was the flagship of the North Atlantic squadron, successively under the command of Captains David B. Harmony, Joseph Fyffe, Robert L. Bradford, James N. Miller, Oscar F. Stanton, and Robert Boyd; and in January, 1887, she was condemned and ordered sold.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE SPANISH WAR—THE "MAINE"

AS the first gun fired by the Confederates upon Fort Sumter in April, 1861, aroused a united North to war, so the destruction of the battleship *Maine*, in the harbor of Havana in February, 1898, was the act which precipitated a contest between the United States and Spain, that only ended when her navy had been swept from the sea and her colonies in two hemispheres had been wrested from her impotent hands. The *Maine*, therefore, may well be classed as a historic ship.

The *Maine* was authorized by Act of Congress, August 3, 1886, her limit of cost being $2,500,000. She was designed at the Navy Department and was built by the Government at the Brooklyn Navy Yard under the superintendence of Captain Robley D. Evans, U.S.N., Chief Inspector of Steel, 1888–89, her keel being laid October 17, 1888. The intention was to rate this vessel as an armored cruiser, but after her completion the Navy Department placed her in the list of second-class battle-ships. The *Maine* was launched November 18, 1890, and put in commission September 11, 1895, by Captain Avent S. Crowninshield. She was a twin-screw ship, 324 feet in length, with 57 feet beam, a mean draught of 21.6 feet and a displacement of

6682 tons. Her engines were of the vertical triple-expansion type with 9293 horse-power. She had a speed of 17.45 knots, and a coal-carrying capacity for seven thousand knots. She carried two military masts, and was protected for 180 feet by side armor of 12-inch steel. Her turrets, standing diagonally, one forward on the starboard beam, the other aft on the port beam, were plated with 8-inch steel, the barbettes from which they rose having twelve inches of steel armor. The deck plating was two inches thick, increasing to four inches on the sloping sides. The bow was formed into a formidable ram, and she had a cocoa-fibre lining, as a protection against water, covering 4733 cubic feet. Her powerful armament included four 10-inch breech-loading rifles in the turrets, while in her main battery she had six 6-inch rapid-fire rifles, protected by shields of 2-inch steel, with a secondary battery of seven 6-pounder and eight 1-pounder rapid-firing guns, four Gatlings, and four Whitehead torpedo-tubes.

In April, 1897, the *Maine*, under command of Captain Charles Dwight Sigsbee, was ordered to the North Atlantic squadron, commanded by Rear-Admiral Montgomery Sicard. On October 12th, she was sent to Port Royal, where she remained until November 15th, when she was ordered to Norfolk, and, on December 12th, she proceeded to Key West, with orders to be held in readiness to steam to Havana at a moment's notice.

During the last months of the year 1897, soon after the recall of Captain-General Weyler, our consular representatives in Cuba pointed out to the home government the desirability of a visit to Cuban waters of one or more of our national ships to accustom the people to the presence of our flag and our warships in the

fulfilment of their mission of protection to American citizens and their interests. In compliance with these requests, and after conference with the Spanish authorities, it was decided on January 24, 1898, to send the *Maine* to Havana, and our Government was officially notified that it was the intention of the Spanish government to send their armored cruiser *Vizcaya* to New York as a return of our courtesy.

On January 25th, the *Maine* entered the port of Havana, and she was taken by a government pilot to a mooring-buoy where no man-of-war had ever before been moored, and but rarely a merchant ship. During the next few days Captain Sigsbee and his officers made the usual visits of ceremony upon the Captain-General and other high officials of Havana, and these visits were returned; but there was a noticeable lack of warmth in the ceremonious visits, while the attitude of the Spanish residents of Havana to our officers was distinctly reserved, and in some cases insulting. It was made very evident in many ways that the visit of the *Maine* was anything but welcome.

On February 15th, at 9.40 P.M., while several officers were on shore, and nearly all the crew were asleep in their hammocks, a terrific explosion, followed by a second shock, tore the forward part of the *Maine* into pieces, causing her to sink almost instantly to the bottom in thirty feet of water, with the loss of two officers and 264 men, out of a total of twenty-six officers and 331 men.

Captain Sigsbee was sitting at the table in his cabin, just closing a letter to his family, when he felt the crash of the explosion. He says in his report:

It was a bursting, rending, and crashing sound or roar of

immense volume, largely metallic in its character. It was succeeded by a metallic sound—probably of falling débris—a trembling and lurching motion of the vessel, then an impression of subsidence, attended by an eclipse of the electric lights and intense darkness within the cabin. I knew immediately that the *Maine* had been blown up and that she was sinking. I hurried to the starboard cabin ports, thinking it might be necessary for me to make my exit in that way. Upon looking out I decided that I could go by the passage leading to the superstructure. I therefore took the latter route, feeling my way along and steadying myself by the bulkheads. The superstructure was filled with smoke and it was dark. Nearing the outer entrance I met Private Anthony, the orderly at the cabin door at the time. He ran into me, and, as I remember, apologized in some fashion, and reported to me that the ship had been blown up and was sinking.

Captain Sigsbee reached the quarter-deck, where he found the executive officer, Lieutenant-Commander Richard Wainwright, and other officers, and learned that the exact time of the explosion was 9.49 P.M. He then proceeded to the poop-deck and ordered the executive officer to post sentries all around the ship, "but soon saw there were no marines available and no place forward to post them."

About this time fire broke out in the mass forward, over the central superstructure, and the only two remaining boats were lowered to assist in saving the wounded, in conjunction with the boats that had by that time arrived from the steamer *City of Washington* and the Spanish frigate *Alphonso XII.*, which were at once sent to their relief.

The shocking news of this disaster appeared in all the principal newspapers of the United States on the morning of February 16th, in a brief despatch from

Captain Sigsbee to the Navy Department, in which he prudently added to the particulars given the words, "Public opinion should be suspended until further report."

Since that other telegram that brought to the North the news of the opening of the Confederate batteries upon Fort Sumter, thirty-seven years before, nothing had so stirred the hearts of the American people as this appalling calamity. The lesson of self-control conveyed in Captain Sigsbee's calm words were indeed needed to prevent a great popular outburst of rage at that moment. But with admirable restraint, the people and their representatives in Congress awaited further developments.

Preparations were at once made for an expert examination of the wreck of the *Maine*, and Rear-Admiral Sicard, commanding the squadron at Key West, presided in a Court of Inquiry composed of Captain W. T. Sampson of the *Iowa;* Captain French E. Chadwick, of the *New York;* Lieutenant-Commander William P. Potter, executive officer of the *New York;* and Lieutenant-Commander Adolph Marix as Judge Advocate. Divers were sent to Havana and professional wreckers from New York were secured. After a deliberate and very careful examination, a report was sent to the President, and by him communicated to Congress on March 28th.

After a technical description of the condition in which the Board found the hull of the *Maine*, the report says:

> In the opinion of the Court, this effect could have been produced only by the explosion of a mine situated under the bottom of the ship at about frame 18 and somewhat on the port side of the ship.

The Court finds that the loss of the *Maine* was not in any respect due to fault or negligence on the part of any of the officers or members of the crew of said vessel.

In the opinion of the Court the *Maine* was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, which caused the partial explosion of two or more of her forward magazines.

The Court also found

that no evidence has been obtainable fixing the responsibility for the destruction of the *Maine* upon any person or persons.

The testimony taken before the Court was given with the report, and the almost universal opinion of the country was confirmed that the *Maine* had been deliberately and treacherously destroyed by the Spaniards. That this opinion was shared by the Administration was shown by the fact that closely following upon the receipt of the report of the Court of Inquiry, on April 11th the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations sent in a report endeavoring to fix the responsibility for the destruction of the *Maine*. This report says:

It is the opinion of your committee, having considered the testimony submitted to the Board of Inquiry in connection with further testimony taken by the committee and with the relevant and established facts presented by the events of the last three years, that the destruction of the *Maine* was compassed either by the official act of the Spanish authorities or was made possible by a negligence on their part so willing and gross as to be equivalent in culpability to positive criminal action. . . . It is established that the *Maine* was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, in position under her in a Spanish harbor, at a place where she had been moored to a buoy by the

express direction and guidance of the Spanish authorities. Explosive contrivances of this character are almost exclusively government agencies of warfare. There is no operation of a pacific character for which they can be employed, excepting the removal of wrecks or of harbor obstructions. They are not to be had in any place of private sale. . . . The entire contrivance is a mechanism of a somewhat complicated character, not generally understood except by special manufacturers or by military or naval officers who have been instructed how to operate it. Such mines, when sunk in harbors, are almost invariably discharged by an electric current conducted over a wire leading from the engine of destruction to some place on the shore where a battery can be housed, guarded, and attended by trained operators. They are now placed, or made ready to be placed, in all important harbors; it may fairly be presumed that they had been placed in the harbor of Havana, the history of the last three years being considered.

Soon after, President McKinley sent in his famous message to Congress on Cuban affairs, asking Congress to empower him to end hostilities in Cuba and to secure the establishment of a stable government, capable of maintaining order and observing its international obligations.

This message was referred to the Foreign Relations Committees of both Houses, and on April 13th they reported as follows:

Resolved, That the President is hereby authorized and directed to intervene at once to stop the war in Cuba, to the end and with the purpose of securing permanent peace and order there, and establishing by the free action of the people thereof a stable and independent government of their own in the island of Cuba; and the President is hereby authorized and empowered to use the land and naval forces of the United States to execute the purpose of this resolution.

This resolution passed the House by a vote of 324 to 19 and was sent to the Senate, where a new report was presented and sent back to the House for concurrence; but it was not until April 19th that an agreement was reached between the two bodies by which the Senate majority resolutions were adopted, as follows:

Whereas, The abhorrent conditions which have existed for more than three years in the island of Cuba, so near our own borders, have shocked the moral sense of the people of the United States, have been a disgrace to Christian civilization, culminating as they have in the destruction of a United States battle-ship with two hundred and sixty-six of its officers and crew, while on a friendly visit in the harbor of Havana, and cannot be longer endured, as has been set forward by the President of the United States in his message to Congress of April 11, 1898, upon which the action of Congress was invited: Therefore,

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

First. That the people of the island of Cuba are, and of a right ought to be, free and independent.

Second. That it is the duty of the United States to demand and the government of the United States does hereby demand, that the government of Spain at once relinquish its authority and government in the island of Cuba, and withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters.

Third. That the President of the United States, be, and he hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call into the actual service of the United States the militia of the several States, to such extent as may be necessary to carry these resolutions into effect.

Fourth. That the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island except for the pacification

thereof, and asserts its determination, when this is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people.

These joint resolutions were adopted by 42 to 35 in the Senate and 311 to 6 in the House. They were approved by the President on April 20th, and a copy was sent early on the morning of the twenty-first to the Spanish Minister, Señor Polo y Bernabé, who at once asked for his passports and left the country. The Spanish ministry, having heard of the passage of the resolutions by Congress, sent our Minister his passports on April 21st, and war with Spain was declared on April 25, 1898, as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

First. That war be, and the same is, hereby declared to exist, and that war has existed since the twenty-first day of April anno Domini eighteen hundred and ninety-eight, including said day, between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Spain.

Second. That the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call into actual service of the United States the militia of the several States, to such extent as may be necessary to carry this act into effect.

Thus, within sixty-four days after the destruction of the *Maine* in the harbor of Havana, Spain and the United States had entered into a contest of arms that ended eighty-two days later—on August 12, 1898, when the protocol of peace was signed in Washington by M. Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador, acting under the authority of the Spanish government. The termination of hostilities was followed by a treaty of

peace, by which Spain was forever divested of all her remaining American colonies, as well as her possessions in the Philippine Islands and Guam, while her navy had been practically swept from the ocean in the battles of Manila Bay and Santiago. Perhaps never before in history had retribution been so swift and so decisive, and Spain had certainly good cause to "remember the *Maine!*"

The second *Maine* in our navy was authorized by an Act of Congress in 1898, providing for the construction of three first-class battle-ships—the *Maine*, *Missouri*, and the *Ohio*. The keel of the new *Maine* was laid in 1899 at Cramp's shipyard in Philadelphia, and she was launched on July 27, 1901.

She is 393 feet 10½ inches in length, with 72 feet 2½ inches beam; mean draught of 23½ feet, a displacement of 12,500 tons, a speed of eighteen knots, and with a coal capacity for ten thousand knots. Her cost was $2,885,000. The very powerful and diversified armament of this battle-ship consists of four 12-inch breech-loading rifles, mounted in pairs in elliptical balanced turrets on the middle line; sixteen 6-inch rapid-fire guns mounted in broadside; eight 14-pounders, eight 3-pounders, and eight 1-pounders and several machine guns. The 6-inch guns are placed in recessed ports, the wings of which are elongated to protect the muzzles when the guns are not firing. There are two submerged torpedo-tubes, the *Maine* class being the first of the battle-ships in which the tubes have been placed below the water-line.

The *Maine* has two military masts, each with two tops; the lower tops provided with two revolving 1-pounder cannon in each top, while the upper ones will be occupied by sharpshooting riflemen.

Defensively the *Maine* is very powerful. Krupp steel armor has been used throughout. The belt armor, which extends three and a half feet below the water-line and four feet above, is eleven inches thick at the top and seven and a half inches at the bottom, and extends to the bow and to within sixty feet of the stern. The casemate armor is six inches thick, that on the barbettes twelve inches thick in front, and eight inches at the back, and that on the turrets twelve inches thick. Forward, the protective deck is two and a half inches thick, while aft, where there is no armor belt, it is four inches on the slope and three inches on the flat.

The *Maine* made 18.3 knots on her official trial trip in August, 1902. She has twin screws, and her two main engines are triple-expansion of the inverted vertical type. The high-pressure cylinder is thirty-eight and a half inches in diameter, the intermediate-pressure cylinder fifty-nine inches, and the low-pressure ninety-two inches. The length of the stroke is forty-two inches. The engines are of nearly eighteen thousand horse-power, or nearly double that of the *Indiana*, and she is the first ship of our navy to be equipped with the French Niclause boiler.

The new *Maine* went into commission during the winter of 1902 under command of Captain H. C. Leutze.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE "OLYMPIA"

LIKE the *Constitution*, the *Hartford*, and the *Kearsarge*, the *Olympia* will doubtless be kept on the list of the United States Navy long after her days of active service have passed, in recognition of that memorable Sunday morning in May, 1898, when, as the flagship of Dewey, she led the way into Manila Bay in the first great victory of the Spanish War.

The *Olympia* was built at the Union Iron Works of San Francisco, at a cost of $1,796,000. Her keel was laid in June, 1891; she was launched on November 5, 1892, and went into commission February 5, 1895, under command of Captain John J. Read.

The *Olympia* is a protected cruiser, 340 feet long, with 53 feet beam and 21½ feet draught, and a displacement of 5870 tons. Her engines are of 17,313 horsepower, and she has a speed record of 21.686 knots. Her protection is an armored deck of two-inch steel on the flat, and 4½ inches on its sloping sides. Her armament is four 8-inch breech-loading rifles mounted in barbette turrets, with 3½ to 4½ inches of steel armor. Her broadside battery is ten 5-inch rapid-fire guns, while her secondary battery is fourteen 6-pounder and seven 1-pounder rapid-fire guns, with four Gatling guns and one field gun. She also has six tubes for White-

head torpedoes. The 5-inch guns are ranged in sponsons fore and aft, protected by four inches of Harveyized steel armor, so placed as to give a direct fire, bow or stern, from four, and a broadside discharge on either side from five guns. The 8-inch guns are twenty-two feet above the water-line and can be trained through an arc of 208 degrees. The fourteen 6-pounders are ranged for broadside fire, and the smaller guns are on the bridge and in the fighting-tops. Her complement is 466 men. The *Olympia*, in command of Captain John J. Read, was flagship of the Asiatic squadron under the flag of Rear-Admiral McNair from February, 1895, to July, 1897, when Captain Charles V. Gridley was ordered to her command.

During the summer of the year 1897, while Commodore George Dewey was at Washington as President of the Board of Inspection and Survey, he made application to the Navy Department for the command of the Asiatic squadron, Admiral McNair's tour of sea duty having nearly expired. Although the fact does not appear on record, it was very generally understood in naval circles at the time that there was considerable opposition in high quarters to the assignment of Dewey to this command, and another officer expected to receive orders to relieve McNair. At this juncture, Senator Redfield Proctor of Vermont called upon President McKinley and urged Dewey's claim with such vigor that the President made a personal request, which was synonymous with an order, that Dewey should be given the desired command. As a result, Dewey wrote to a member of his family on November 1, 1897:

. . . Yes, I am indeed to be congratulated, as I have

UNITED STATES CRUISER "OLYMPIA"

received what is to me the best gift the President could make. . . . I expect to join my flagship *Olympia* at Yokohama about Christmas and to remain in command two years. I go out as Commodore and will not receive my promotion to Rear-Admiral until next summer, a new rule to that effect having been recently made (*Life and Letters of Admiral Dewey*, by Adelbert M. Dewey, p. 411).

The promotion to Rear-Admiral, however, came before "next summer," as a grateful nation's reward for the glorious victory of Manila Bay.

Dewey arrived in Yokohama on Christmas Day, and on January 1, 1898, he relieved Rear-Admiral F. V. McNair of the command of the squadron at Nagasaki. Returning to Yokohama with his ships a fortnight later, Commodore Dewey was accorded, on February 4, 1898, a private audience with the Emperor and Empress of Japan.

The squadron at that time comprised five vessels: the cruisers *Olympia*, Captain Charles V. Gridley; *Raleigh*, Captain J. B. Coglan; *Boston*, Captain Frank Wildes; and the gunboats *Concord*, Commander Asa Walker; and *Petrel*, Commander E. P. Wood. Shortly after his reception by the Japanese Emperor, Commodore Dewey proceeded with his vessels to Hong-Kong. Our relations with Spain at that time were severely strained, and in pursuance of the policy of keeping the Asiatic squadron up to its highest state of efficiency, Secretary Long had cabled Dewey at Yokohama on January 27, 1898: "Retain until further orders the crew of the squadron whose terms of enlistment have expired."

On February 25th, Assistant Secretary Roosevelt cabled Dewey at Yokohama:

"Secret and confidential. Order the Squadron, except the *Monocacy*, to Hong-Kong. Keep full of coal. In the event of declaration of war with Spain, your duty will be to see that the Spanish Squadron does not leave the Asiatic Coast, and then offensive operations in the Philippine Islands.

(The *Olympia* had previously been ordered to proceed to the United States.)

During the month of April, in carrying out his orders from the Department, Dewey had purchased the English steamer *Nanshan*, laden with 3300 tons of Cardiff coal, and the steamer *Zafiro* of the Manila and Hong-Kong Line, which he loaded with spare ammunition. On April 18th, the revenue cutter *McCulloch* joined the squadron, and every day and all day the officers and men were cheerfully and busily engaged in preparation for what they hoped was to be active service, while the ships of the little fleet were brought up to the very highest state of efficiency in every detail.

In this connection, in a letter to his sister from Hong-Kong, written in April, Dewey says:

We are still waiting for the declaration of war to begin our work out here. I have seven men-of-war all ready for action and should war be the word, I believe we will make short work of the Spanish reign in the Philippines. The insurgents are ready to rise at our first gun and long before this reaches you, we may be masters of Manila and Philippine cities. . . . I believe I am not over-confident in saying that with the force under my command, I could enter the Bay of Manila, capture or destroy the Spanish Squadron, and reduce the defences in one day" (*Dewey's Life and Letters*, p. 198).

As a matter of fact, before this letter reached its destination, Dewey had accomplished all he claimed in

less than half a day, including three full hours taken for rest and breakfast.

On the 21st of April, the *Baltimore*, Capt. N. Mayo Dyer, joined the squadron at Hong-Kong, bringing a large supply of ammunition for the ships from Honolulu, and on the same day came a cable from Secretary Long, saying: "The naval force on the North Atlantic station are blockading Cuba. War has not yet been declared. War may be declared at any moment; I will inform you; await orders." Within forty-eight hours Captain Dyer, aided by his efficient executive officer, Lieutenant-Commander G. Blocklinger, had docked, coaled, cleaned, painted, and provisioned his ship and had her ready for sea, an almost unprecedented performance.

Keyed up to the highest state of anxious expectation by this news, the officers and crews of the squadron waited three days longer, when, on the 24th of March, Long's famous despatch came to Dewey:

> War has commenced between the United States and Spain. Proceed at once to Philippine Islands. Commence operations at once, particularly against the Spanish fleet. You must capture vessels or destroy. Use utmost endeavors.

As the English proclamation of neutrality had already been cabled to the Governor of Hong-Kong, that official at once requested Commodore Dewey to leave the harbor, and Dewey sailed on March 25th for Mirs Bay, China, where he awaited the arrival of Mr. O. F. Williams, United States Consul at Manila, who was expected to bring important information from that port. During this time of waiting, the crews of the squadron were kept busily engaged in stripping their

ships of all superfluous woodwork and in drills at general quarters, in anticipation of battle.

Just before sailing from Hong-Kong, Prince Henry, the younger brother of the Emperor of Germany, called on Commodore Dewey on board the *Olympia* to say good-bye, as the American fleet was about to leave Chinese waters for Manila, as was well understood. United States Consul Wildman and Captain Gridley were of the party on the quarter-deck when the Prince said, with a smile, "Commodore, I will send my ships to Manila to see that you behave." With the utmost courtesy, Dewey responded, "I shall be delighted to have you do so, your Highness; but permit me to caution you to keep your ships from between my guns and the enemy!" This badinage was recalled by the hearers a month later, when Admiral Von Diederich made himself so offensive and received his sharp rebuke from Dewey in the Bay of Manila.

On the 27th of April, Dewey summoned his captains to a council on board the *Olympia*, when he informed them of his plans and issued his final orders; and at two o'clock that afternoon the fleet steamed out of Mirs Bay, heading to the southward. That evening, at quarters, it was formally announced by Captain Gridley to the assembled crew that war existed between the United States and Spain, and the correspondent of the New York *Herald*, who was on board the *Olympia* says:

The rousing cheer that went up from every division showed that the men regarded the long-expected news with the keenest satisfaction. Copies of the bombastic proclamation of Captain-General Augustin, that had been published in Manila upon the declaration of war, were posted on the bulletin boards of the *Olympia* and the other ships

of the fleet. The following paragraph elicited the heartiest laughter from the amused Jackies: "A Squadron manned by foreigners, possessing neither instruction nor discipline, is preparing to come to this Archipelago with ruffianly intention of robbing us of all that means life, honor, and liberty."

On the morning of the thirtieth, the fleet was off Bolindao, and, finding no Spanish ships there, Dewey sent the *Boston* and *Concord* into Port Subic Bay to reconnoitre, having been informed that Admiral Montojo had intended to take position there; but a thorough search satisfied the Commodore that the Spanish fleet was not in that bay. The captains were again summoned on board the flagship, where they were notified that the squadron would enter Manila Bay that night, and at six o'clock in the evening the ships steamed slowly down the coast at a rate of speed calculated to bring them off the entrance of Manila Bay at midnight. The fleet followed the *Olympia*, all lights out, except that each vessel carried a hooded lantern on the taffrail as a guide to the ship astern, the *McCulloch* and the transports bringing up the rear of the column.

At 9.42, the crew of the *Olympia* were called to general quarters, where the men remained, sleeping by their guns, through the night. When well below Corregidor, the fleet entered the Boca Grande, or South Channel, at 11.30 P.M., steaming in column at eight knots. When half the ships had passed the batteries on the south side of the channel, a fireman on board the *McCulloch* inadvertently threw some fine coal on the fire under the boilers, and a shower of sparks pouring out of her funnel attracted the attention of

the garrison; but it was not until eleven o'clock, when most of the squadron had passed, that the battery opened fire, none of the shots taking effect. The *Boston* and *McCulloch* responded as they passed, and, later, a rocket was sent up from the south shore, answering signals flashed from a dozen points within the bay, and a shell came hurtling from El Fraile at the Yankee fleet.

The *Boston*, *Concord*, and *McCulloch* each fired a shot or two, but the fleet still continued its passage slowly up the bay, the speed of the ships reduced to three knots, until four o'clock, when coffee and bread and cold meat were served to officers and men. At 5.06 a torpedo or mine was exploded directly ahead of the *Olympia*, but at such a distance as to do her no damage.

Manila Bay is a four-sided body of water projecting inland from the southwest corner of the island of Luzon, its mouth about six miles wide. A mile offshore from the northern point is Corregidor Island, rising six hundred feet above the sea. Here a battery of 8-inch Krupp guns had been placed at a height to deliver a plunging fire upon an approaching enemy. The Boca Grande, a channel five miles wide, separates Corregidor on the south side from El Fraile Island, where batteries had also been placed. About seventeen miles from the mouth of the Bay, on its southeastern shore, lies Cavite, with the Spanish dockyard and arsenal. A long spit of land, forming a hook, projects toward Manila, which is seated about eight miles northeast, on the eastern shore of the bay. Cavite arsenal extends eastward over another point of land, and the main body of water between the arsenal and the shore is called Bacoor Bay, while the smaller body formed by the point of the hook is Sangley Point, and the land on which the arsenal is built is the Bay of Carracao. In

this retreat, sheltered by the land batteries, the Spanish fleet of ten ships was found anchored in a line stretching east and west across the mouth of Bacoor Bay, with their left in shoal water in Carracao Bay.

The three batteries at Manila and two at Cavite now opened upon the American ships, and the Spanish fleet almost immediately followed suit; but Dewey held his fire as he stood down for them in the following order, which was preserved during the action: *Olympia*, *Baltimore*, *Raleigh*, *Petrel*, *Concord*, and *Boston*. At 5.41 A.M., at a distance of 5500 yards, Dewey swerved the *Olympia* to starboard and quietly gave the famous order, "When you are ready, you may fire, Gridley," and at the word, the two 8-inch rifles in the forward turret were discharged and their shots were hurled at the Spanish flagship. At the same moment, the forward guns of the other ships were fired. The *Olympia* leading, the fleet stood down for the centre of the Spanish line, the enemy keeping up a most rapid fire. One large shell burst less than a hundred feet ahead of the flagship, a fragment cutting the *Olympia's* rigging directly over the head of the Commodore and his flag-lieutenant on the bridge. Almost at the same moment, another shot passed under the bridge and cut a piece out of the deck. Still the *Olympia* stood down for the enemy, and, when assured that he was within proper range, the Commodore signalled the fleet, "Open with all the guns," and then pandemonium reigned indeed.

Keeping up a continual fire, the squadron steamed past the anchored ships at a range of a mile and a half, until reaching the forts on Cavite Point, when, slowly turning, they repassed the Spaniards, pouring in a destructive fire from their starboard batteries.

Early in the engagement two launches came out toward the *Olympia* with the apparent purpose of using torpedoes, but one of these was speedily sunk and the other was disabled by the rapid fire from the guns of the flagship. At 7 A.M., as the ships were coming down for the third time along the Spanish line, Dewey signalled the fleet to prepare to anchor, as he had decided that he might in that way more effectually destroy the enemy's ships; but his plan was changed by an unexpected move on the part of Montojo, who at that moment slipped the cables of the *Reina Cristina*, and steamed rapidly toward the *Olympia*, with the evident intention of coming to close quarters. She had only advanced a short distance, however, when the *Olympia* concentrated a fire upon the Spanish flagship that was unendurable. One shell struck the port bridge, where Montojo was standing, but he escaped with a slight wound. Another 8-inch shell exploded on the forecastle and put four guns out of action. The steering-gear of the *Cristina* was shot away, her sides were riddled, most of her guns were disabled, and her motive-power was quickly crippled. As she turned to run inshore, her stern was presented to the *Olympia* and a 250-pound 8-inch shell struck it fairly, tearing its way through everything until it exploded near one of the boilers, ripping up the protective deck, killing and wounding sixty men, the captain of the flagship being among the killed.

Admiral Montojo, finding his ship on fire and sinking, her sides crushed in and her deck a shambles, left the *Reina Cristina* and transferred his flag to the *Isla de Cuba*. After steaming to the east, the American ships again turned, and, passing the enemy a third time, poured in their fire until the *Castilla* was in flames as well as the *Reina Cristina*.

Five times our ships passed the Spanish line, each time the number of their enemy decreasing, until, it having been erroneously reported to the Commodore that only fifteen rounds per gun remained for the 5-inch rapid-fire battery, Dewey turned to the executive officer, Lieutenant Rees, and inquired, "What time is it, Rees?"—"7.45, sir."—"Breakfast time," responded the Commodore; "run up the signals, 'cease firing,' and, 'follow me.'" And Dewey withdrew his squadron for consultation, a redistribution of ammunition if necessary, and, incidentally, for breakfast,—exactly as Farragut, his old master in the art of war, had done on that August morning in Mobile Bay thirty-four years before.

During the whole of the engagement, up to this time, the three batteries at Manila had kept up a continuous fire upon the American ships, to which they had not replied. Dewey now sent a message to the Governor General, by the British Consul, Mr. Rawson Walker,—who came on board the *Olympia* to request that the city might be spared from bombardment,—to the effect that Manila was in a state of blockade by his fleet; that he proposed to occupy Cavite, and if the Manila batteries did not cease firing on his ships he would shell the city. His threat had the desired effect.

To the Spaniards this withdrawal of their enemy's ships at such a critical period of the action argued disaster, and the Spanish Governor telegraphed to Madrid: "Our fleet engaged the enemy in a brilliant combat, protected by the Cavite and Manila forts. They obliged the enemy with heavy loss to manœuvre repeatedly."

While this ambiguous and consoling despatch was being read at Madrid, Dewey, having given his men

needed rest and refreshment, and discovering that he still had an abundant supply of ammunition, signalled the *Baltimore* at 10.45 o'clock to "attack the enemy's batteries or earthworks," to which the ever-ready Dyer, who, as a young officer, had been in the Mobile fight with Farragut, at once led in, with starboard helm, to a position off the Carracao and Sangley Point batteries and opened fire with his starboard battery at 2800 yards, closing in to 2200 yards, stopping his engines when the range was obtained, and delivering a rapid and accurate fire until he had silenced the batteries and the gunboat, *Don Antonia de Ulloa*, inside the point. As the *Baltimore* cleaned out the Spanish batteries in this deliberate and workmanlike manner, the *Olympia's* men, who had been at the front earlier in the morning, cheered the *Baltimore* again and again; and they fairly yelled with generous appreciation of the pluck of the little *Petrel*, when later she went into the inner harbor and sunk and burned what was still left of Montojo's fleet. The *Olympia* and the other ships followed the *Baltimore* in this last round, keeping up their fire until the entire fleet was in flames; and at 12.30 P. M., no further resistance being made, our squadron ceased firing and the battle was won.

In this brilliant engagement, the *Reina Cristina*, *Castilla*, and *Don Antonia de Ulloa* were sunk; the *Don Juan de Austria*, *Isla de Luzon*, *Isla de Cuba*, *General Lezo*, *Marquis del Duero*, *El Correo*, *Velasco*, and *Isla de Mindanao* were burned; and the tugs *Rapido* and *Hercules* and several launches were captured. Admiral Montojo reported his loss as seventy-eight killed on the ships and twenty-three on shore, total, 101; while 280 were wounded. On our side, eight men, all on the *Baltimore*, were slightly wounded, while our ships were

practically uninjured and could have gone into battle, if necessary, the next day without any repairs.

After the action was over, Lieutenant Edward M. Hughes of the *Petrel* was sent on shore at Cavite with a whale-boat, and finished the destruction of the abandoned Spanish ships by burning the *Don Juan de Austria*, *Isla de Luzon*, *Isla de Cuba*, *General Lezo*, *Marquis del Duero*, and *El Correo*, bringing off two tugs and three steam launches when he returned to his ship.

The news of this complete and brilliant victory, by which the entire Spanish fleet in the East had been destroyed at a single blow, was received at home with the wildest enthusiasm, and the country rang with Dewey's name. Secretary Long cabled:

> The President, in the name of the American people, thanks you and your officers and men for your splendid achievement and overwhelming victories. In recognition he has appointed you Acting Admiral and will recommend a vote of thanks to you by Congress as a foundation for further promotion.

By a joint resolution, passed May 9, 1898, by a standing vote, Congress tendered their thanks and the thanks of the American people to Commodore Dewey, and through him to the officers and men under his command, for the gallantry and skill exhibited by them in the destruction of the Spanish fleet and batteries in the harbor of Manila. Senator Hale at once introduced a bill, which was unanimously passed, increasing the number of Rear-Admirals in the navy from six to seven, and the President immediately promoted Acting Rear-Admiral Dewey to the rank of Rear-Admiral. Senator Quay followed with a resolution appropriating

$10,000 for the purchase of a jewelled sword to be presented by the Secretary of the Navy to Admiral Dewey, and the Secretary was authorized to have bronze medals struck commemorating the battle of Manila Bay to be distributed among the officers and men of Dewey's squadron. This superb sword, its hilt of solid gold, with the Admiral's initials set in large diamonds, bears the inscription, "The Gift of the Nation to Rear-Admiral George Dewey, U. S. N., in Memory of the Victory at Manila Bay, May 1st, 1898."

As might have been expected, Dewey's native State was not backward in expressing her appreciation of her distinguished son, and the Vermont Legislature, convened in extraordinary session, passed complimentary resolutions expressing their "keen gratification that the first great honors of the war should fall to a son of Vermont." A number of gentlemen also raised a large sum to provide a statue of Dewey, to be made of Vermont marble and placed by the side of the statue of Ethan Allen in the porch of the State House at Montpelier. Other States joined in paying special honors to the hero of Manila Bay; and in England the people and press cordially acknowledged his great success, which they recognized as a victory of the Anglo-Saxon over the Latin race. In Germany and France, however, there was but grudging praise for his glorious achievement, and every effort was made to minimize its importance.

Although the success of our fleet had been so complete in this engagement and we had escaped with such trifling loss, it must not be supposed that the opposition of the Spanish fleet had been feeble. In a private letter to a naval friend, Dewey pays his enemy this tribute:

ADMIRAL GEORGE DEWEY, U.S.N.

The Spanish Admiral Montojo fought his ships like a hero. He stood on his quarter-deck until his ship was ablaze from stern to stern and absolutely sinking under his feet; then transferring his flag to the *Isla de Cuba*, he fought with what was left of his fleet, standing fearlessly amid a hail of shrapnel until his second ship and over one hundred of her crew sank like lead in a whirl of water.

It seems to me that history in its roll of heroes should make mention of an Admiral who could fight his ships so bravely, and stand on the bridge coolly and calmly when his fleet captain was torn to pieces at his side. I sent him a message telling him how I appreciated the gallantry with which he had fought his ships and the deep admiration my officers and men felt for the commander of the *Reina Cristina*, who nailed his colors to the mast and then went down with his gallant crew.

A comparative view of the two fleets engaged at Manila shows six American ships with fifty-seven large guns and seventy-four rapid-fire guns and 1678 men—casualties seven; while there were ten Spanish ships with fifty-two large guns and seventy-two rapid-fire guns, and 1796 men, beside which the Spanish fleet was at anchor under cover of heavy batteries armed with modern rifled guns. The Spanish casualties were 618. It must not be forgotten in this connection that in 1896, when war was imminent between Spain and Germany over the question of the Caroline Islands, great preparations were made by the Spanish government for defending the Philippine Islands, and modern guns and quantities of military stores were at that time sent out to Manila. As a result, when Dewey entered the bay, the shore guns defending Manila—excluding the old Spanish ordnance—were four 9½-inch and four 5½-inch breech-loading rifles, nine 8½-inch muzzle-loading rifle mortars, two 5.9 and two 4.7-inch breech-

loading siege rifles, and fifteen 6.3-inch muzzle-loading rifles. At Sangley Point were two 5.9-inch breech-loading rifle siege guns, and at the Cavite arsenal three 6.3-inch muzzle-loading rifles. On Corregidor three 8-inch muzzle-loading rifles; at Punta Gorda, three 7-inch muzzle-loading rifles; at Punta Bassissituo, two 6.3-inch breech-loading rifles; on Caballo Island, three 6-inch breech-loading rifles; on El Fraile, three breech-loading rifles; and at Restinga, three 6.2-inch breech-loading rifles, a grand total of fifty-eight modern rifled guns, all connected by telephone, and with plane tables, arranged at the extremities of measured bases to give accurate ranges.

Had the conditions been reversed and had Dewey and his American officers and seamen been given Montojo's fleet, lying under cover of the fifty-eight guns in Manila Bay and manned by American gunners, does any sane person believe for a moment that the Spaniards in Dewey's ships could have gained the victory of the 1st of May?

The secret of Dewey's success in this engagement—a victory gained with no loss to him—is to be found in the steadiness and precision of the fire from his ships, which was the result of continued and skilful training; in the undaunted courage and superb morale of the officers and men of our navy; and, most important of all, in the inspiring presence of a leader possessing mature judgment and unswerving strength of purpose, a disciplinarian and a fighter, one who had learned from Farragut the lesson, "Be thoroughly prepared before you go ahead and then fight your enemy wherever he is to be found." Dewey has said himself, "The battle of Manila Bay was fought in Hong-Kong Harbor." It had been carefully planned in advance, and was

fought to a successful conclusion on the original lines.

On Monday, May 2d, Dewey brought his squadron into an anchorage off Cavite, and shortly after a tug came from Corregidor under a flag of truce with an offer from the commandant of that post to surrender. The following day, the *Baltimore* and *Raleigh* were sent down to take possession of the island, which they found deserted save by the commandant, and all the guns overturned. Captain Dyer landed a force and took possession of the island. On May 2d, Dewey sent Commander Lamberton, his chief-of-staff, in the *Petrel* to take possession of the Cavite arsenal. When the gunboat had run in to within five hundred yards of the beach, it was observed that the white flag had been taken down and a number of armed men were about the arsenal. Commander Wood trained the *Petrel's* guns on the beach, and Commander Lamberton, with Lieut. A. N. Wood and an armed party landed. After a parley, in which the Spanish Captain Sistoa fruitlessly endeavored to gain time to communicate with Manila, Lamberton gave the Spaniard twenty minutes to surrender, and returned to his boat to await the decision. At the appointed hour, twelve o'clock, he returned and found that the Spaniards had evacuated the arsenal, and a guard of marines was immediately landed to protect the government property.

Dewey at once proceeded to establish a blockade of the port of Manila, keeping his naval base at Cavite; and for the next few weeks he was busily engaged in refitting and placing in commission such of the Spanish gunboats as could be made available for service. Another element of difficulty was soon presented by the arrival on May 13th of two German, one French,

one Japanese, and one British war-ship. Three other German cruisers arrived soon afterward, the whole under command of Rear-Admiral Von Diederich, thus making the German squadron superior in strength to the American fleet. The German and French officers made themselves very obnoxious to the American officers by their evident sympathy with the Spaniards in Manila, and by the manner in which their ships were moved about at night in seeming defiance of the rules of a blockade.

Dewey bore these petty insults with seeming equanimity until he learned that a German cruiser had landed provisions in Manila. He then sent his flag-lieutenant, Thomas M. Brumby, to Von Diederich with his compliments and begged to call the Admiral's attention to "an extraordinary disregard of the usual courtesies of naval intercourse," and, he added, as an afterthought, "Brumby, tell Admiral Von Diederich if he wants a fight he can it have right now!" This incident is stated by Mr. Stickney of the New York *Herald*, who overheard the conversation. The German Admiral declared that he was ignorant of the occurrences to which Admiral Dewey referred and regretted them, and afterward there was less occasion for complaint on this score.

Aguinaldo, with thirteen of his staff, arrived on May 19th on the *Nanshan* and established himself at Cavite, and with his coming there were further complications for Dewey, who was instructed by cable not to have political alliances with the insurgents or any faction in the islands. It was, therefore, an immense relief for the Admiral when, on July 4th, the first detachment of twenty-five hundred American troops arrived and were landed at Cavite, and still greater when the transports with the second army detachment, under General

Greene, came in on the seventeenth of the same month, and General Merritt arrived two weeks later. On May 20th, Captain Gridley, who had commanded the *Olympia* since Dewey came to the squadron, was condemned by a medical survey and ordered home, leaving on May 28th. Commander Lamberton was appointed by the Admiral to succeed in the command of the ship.

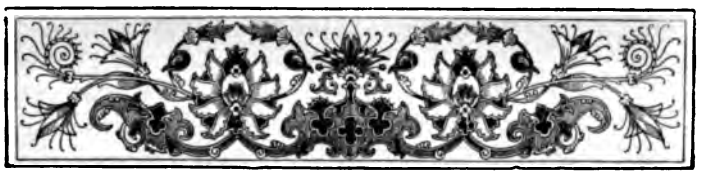
Events now moved more rapidly. On June 30th, the *Charleston* arrived, after having taken possession of Guam. August 4th, the ironclad *Monterey* and the *Brutus*, with a full supply of coal came, in; and, on August 12th, the *Olympia* and the fleet engaged the land batteries of Manila, while General Merritt attacked the fortifications with his force. After a feeble resistance, the Spaniards surrendered and the American flag was hoisted over Manila by Flag-Lieutenant Brumby. The next day the cable announced that the peace protocol had been signed, and all hostilities and the blockade were to be suspended, and on November 28, 1898, the treaty of peace between Spain and the United States was signed.

But although the war with Spain was now closed, the work of the navy was by no means ended, and the vessels of the fleet were kept busy among the islands of the archipelago for a full year in removing Spanish garrisons, pacifying the natives, and, later, in operations against the Filipinos. It was not until May, 1899, that Dewey felt justified in leaving the islands he had wrested from Spain; and on the twentieth of that month, after turning over the command of the squadron to Captain A. S. Barker in the *Brooklyn*, he left Manila in the *Olympia* for home, *via* Hong-Kong and the Suez Canal. Wherever the good ship stopped on that triumphal passage, the Admiral and his officers and crew

were received with notable demonstrations of respect and his arrival at New York, on September 26, 1899, was made the occasion of a military and naval ovation lasting two days, such as had never before been awarded to a naval hero, save only Farragut. Dewey visited in turn various cities throughout the country, each vying with the other in awarding him honor and homage.

On March 1, 1899, Congress unanimously passed a bill reviving the grade of Admiral so as "to provide prompt and adequate reward for Rear-Admiral George Dewey, the said grade and rank to exist only during the lifetime of this officer." In this promotion Dewey realized the very height of his ambition, as is shown in the letter to his brother, Hon. Charles Dewey, dated from the *Olympia* at Manila, December 10, 1898, in which he says: "I have strong letters urging me to become the Democratic candidate for President. . . . I had rather be an Admiral ten times over." Dewey was also presented with a completely furnished house in Washington costing $50,000.

The *Olympia* was sent around from New York to the Charlestown Navy Yard in October, 1899, to receive extensive repairs; and Dewey's flagship was visited by thousands of interested persons from all over New England. While at Charlestown the *Olympia* was thoroughly overhauled and entirely modernized at an outlay of fully $600,000. Her repairs completed, the ship was put in commission in October, 1901, by Captain Henry W. Lyon, as the flagship of Rear-Admiral Francis J. Higginson, commanding the North Atlantic squadron. In August, 1902, she participated in the war game as one of the Blue squadron in defending the coast of New England from the attack of the White squadron, under Commander John E. Pillsbury.



CHAPTER XXV

THE "OREGON"

THE *Oregon* is the last of the twenty-six vessels we have selected for the purpose of this work, as representative of the historic ships of the United States and Confederate States navies during the century and a quarter of our national existence. This noble ship, in addition to her fine battle record at Santiago, successfully performed a feat unrivalled for a battle-ship in the naval annals of the world, in her great race against time and the enemy, when she steamed 14,706 miles around the continent, frustrating the plans of the Spaniards to waylay her, and arrived in sixty-eight days at Jupiter Inlet, Fla., in efficient condition and in readiness to have gone into action the next day if her services were required.

An Act of Congress approved June 30, 1890, provided for the construction of three battle-ships. There were few restrictions in this act, so that the designers were allowed large latitude, and the story goes that when Secretary Tracy sent for Lewis Nixon, then in the Naval Construction Bureau, and informed him of the liberal terms of the act authorizing the construction of the new battle-ships, he said: "Now, sir, what you've to do is to design a ship that can lick anything afloat."

The three ships built under this act were the *Indiana*,

the *Massachusetts*, and the *Oregon*. The first two were constructed by the Cramps of Philadelphia, and the latter by the Union Iron Works of San Francisco, her keel being laid November 19, 1891; she was launched two years later, on October 26, 1893, and was commissioned July 15, 1896, by Captain Henry L. Howison. The *Oregon* is a first-class battle-ship, costing $3,180,000. She is 348 feet long with 69 feet 3 inches beam; a mean draught of 24 feet, and a displacement of 10,188 tons. She is fitted with twin-screw, vertical, triple-expansion engines of 11.111 horse-power, giving her a speed of 16.79 knots; and her coal capacity is nearly 1600 tons. Her armament is four 13-inch rifle guns, eight 8-inch, four 6-inch, and twenty 6- and six 1-pounders in her secondary battery, with four machine guns in her tops and several Whitehead torpedoes. Her complement is thirty-two officers and 441 men.

Her side armor is of Harveyized steel, eighteen inches thick above, bevelled down to eight inches at the bottom. This is seven feet two inches in width, resting on the double skin of the lower hull and rising three feet above the water-line. It extends two thirds the length of the ship and is joined at the ends by bulkheads of 14-inch steel, forming a practically impregnable central citadel as a protection to the engines, boilers, and magazines. This is roofed with 2¾-inch steel and forward and aft the steel deck extends in a curve to the bow and stern. Above this roof, which forms the berth-deck, the sides of the ship rise eight feet, protected by four inches of steel armor, behind which are ten feet of coal in the bunkers, a sufficient protection against rapid-fire shells. Forward and aft of the citadel the upper section has no armor.

The turrets of the 13-inch guns have walls of steel fifteen inches thick, while the barbettes are seventeen inches in thickness. Above the turrets is the sighting-hood. The 8-inch guns are in turrets at the sides of the ship, twenty-six feet above the water-line, and can be fired dead forward or aft and worked in any kind of weather. The 6-inch guns are protected by shields of 6-inch steel. The conning-tower, which is the lower section of the military mast, is plated with eight inches of steel, stands back of the forward main turret at an elevation to give a clear view on all sides. Above it is the pilot-house, and at its side the search-lights are placed. The military mast is fitted with a series of platforms with circular shields to be used as fighting-tops, from which the rapid-fire and machine guns can pour a rain of fire on the deck of an enemy.

On March 20, 1897, Captain Albert Smith Barker assumed command of the *Oregon*, and under him the ship was brought into a very high state of efficiency. In February, 1898, at the termination of Captain Barker's tour of sea duty, he was relieved by Captain Alexander H. McCormick. On March 7th, while the *Oregon* was at Tacoma, Wash., Captain McCormick received the following despatch from Secretary Long: "The situation is getting worse. You should go to San Francisco as soon as possible and get ammunition." McCormick, who had kept his ship for some time in readiness, left Tacoma the same day, arriving in San Francisco, March 9th, and at once begun filling up his magazines and coal-bunkers. On March 12th the Secretary telegraphed:

When in all respects ready for sea, proceed to Callao and await further orders. In view of the present critical con-

dition of affairs, the *Oregon* should leave San Francisco at the earliest possible date and arrive in Callao as soon as practicable.

Meanwhile, Captain McCormick had become incapacitated by ill-health, and Captain Charles Edgar Clark was detached from the *Monterey*, assumed command March 17th, and sailed on his long and perilous voyage March 19th. The Navy Department issued orders on March 22d to the *Marietta*, then at San José de Guatemala, to precede the *Oregon* in order to make advance arrangements for coal and to facilitate in every way the passage of this battle-ship, so sorely needed to reinforce the fleet in Cuban waters.

The *Oregon* had a good run down the coast and arrived at Callao, April 4, 1898, having made an average speed of 10.7 knots. Captain Clark remained only eighty hours in port, taking in in that time eleven hundred tons of coal, which Commander Symonds had ready in lighters in advance of the *Oregon's* arrival. The *Marietta* left Callao on March 31st for Valparaiso, where she had been ordered to make similar advance arrangements. When Captain Clark left Callao he had one boiler still under repair. Before sailing he telegraphed Secretary Long that if coal could be provided for him at Sandy Point, Patagonia, he could make Bahia without stopping at Valparaiso on the Pacific side, or at Montevideo on the South Atlantic coast. In accordance with this request, Long telegraphed the *Marietta* at Valparaiso to go ahead to Sandy Point and secure six hundred tons of coal if possible, and from that point to accompany the *Oregon* to the North Atlantic.

The *Oregon* had comparatively good weather after

UNITED STATES BATTLE-SHIP "OREGON"

leaving Callao, although the heavy Pacific swell, increased by fresh southerly winds, made the ship pitch heavily, the jack-staff at times disappearing under the solid seas that swept over everything but the superstructure deck; but Captain Clark felt that the condition of affairs at home warranted him in driving the noble ship at a high rate of speed.

He entered the Straits of Magellan at about 3.30 P.M. on April 16th, in a terrific storm, with rain so dense that the shores could not be seen and no soundings could be obtained. For a time the ship was in great danger, but just before dark the anchors were let go in thirty-eight to fifty-two fathoms of water, on a rocky shelf, fringed by islets and reefs, and they fortunately held through what Captain Clark reported were "some of the most violent gusts I have ever experienced." Before morning the gale moderated, and, getting under way, the *Oregon* anchored off Sandy Point on April 17th, the total run from Callao having been made at the rate of eleven and three quarter knots an hour.

To his great annoyance, Captain Clark found that the hulk from which the coal contracted for by Commander Symonds was to be furnished was loaded above the coal with wool, and the crews of the *Oregon* and *Marietta* were engaged three precious days in transferring the wool and taking in the coal. During this time, the crew, who were working by watches, declined to take their hammocks from the nettings, catching a few hours' sleep on deck between shifts, to expedite the coaling. On the twenty-first the two ships sailed, but Captain Clark found that the *Marietta's* low rate of speed delayed him, and it was not until the afternoon of the 30th of April that they reached Rio Janeiro.

Captain Clark had been warned that the Spanish torpedo-boat *Temerario* was at Montevideo, and that her commander knew the *Oregon* was on her way North.

In consequence, during the run from Cape Horn, the lights on the American vessels were carefully screened at night and the battery was kept in constant readiness, four guns' crews in each watch being stationed at the guns. The men exhibited the most admirable spirit during this period of the voyage, the engineer officers voluntarily doubled their watches when high speed was made, and some of the firemen remained at their posts until they were carried out of the fire-room insensible.

At Rio Janeiro Captain Clark received official notice that war had been declared between Spain and the United States on April 21st, that the *Temerario* had left Montevideo for Rio Janeiro, and also the more stirring news that Cervera's fleet of four armored cruisers, "heavy and fast," with three torpedo destroyers, had sailed April 29th from Cape de Verde to the West, "destination unknown." The Secretary telegraphed:

> Must be left to your discretion entirely to avoid this fleet and to reach the United States by the West Indies. You can go when and where you desire. The *Nictheroy* [the purchased Brazilian cruiser] and the *Marietta* subject to the orders of yourself.

The next day, May 1st, came a cable, "Do not sail from Rio Janeiro, Brazil, till further orders. Long." This was followed on the 2d of May by a conflicting despatch: "My telegram of May 2d countermanded. Carry out former instructions, contained in my telegram of May 1st, to proceed with *Oregon*, *Marietta*, and *Nictheroy*."

On May 3d a telegram reached Captain Clark that

stirred the blood of the officers and men of his little fleet to fever heat when its glorious news was made known, and consoled them for all the toil and danger of their past month's voyage. It read: "Inform the Department of your plans. The Spanish fleet in Philippine Islands annihilated by our naval force on the Asiatic station. Long." Clark at once cabled the Department that, in view of the possibility of encountering Cervera's fleet, he should keep off the Brazilian coast and would make all haste for the United States, coaling at sea from the *Nictheroy* if necessary.

Meanwhile, as there was the chance of the *Temerario* coming into Rio, Captain Clark sent an officer to the Brazilian Admiral, explaining to him that the *Oregon*, a $5,000,000 battle-ship, might be disabled or even destroyed by the torpedo vessel of the nation that had blown up the *Maine*, and that Captain Clark relied upon the Brazilian naval forces present to prevent any such act of hostility. But Captain Clark added that if the *Temerario* entered the harbor and approached the *Oregon* with a hostile purpose, "I must destroy her."

The American Minister having arrived during the afternoon and the situation being explained to him, he immediately communicated with the Brazilian government, and Captain Clark got under way with the *Oregon* and went farther up the bay, leaving orders with the *Marietta* to send her steam launch to the *Temerario* if she appeared, and to inform her commander that if she approached within half a mile of the *Oregon* she would be immediately sunk. The Brazilian government were exceedingly courteous in this matter and stationed a cruiser at the entrance of the harbor with orders to stop the torpedo-boat, or if she were permitted to enter, to convoy her to an anchorage well up

the bay. During the stay of the *Oregon*, this cruiser and the fort at Santa Cruz swept the entrance to the bay with their search-lights every night, and the Brazilian officers showed by their acts that their expressions of sympathy and hopes for the success of the *Oregon* on her voyage were genuine.

On the morning of May 4th, the *Nictheroy* being ready, the *Oregon*, with that cruiser and the *Marietta* in company, sailed from Rio Janeiro, but, finding that his progress was much delayed by the inferior speed of these ships, Captain Clark touched at Bahia, Brazil, on the 8th of May, and telegraphed the Navy Department to that effect, informing the Secretary that he had left them near Cape Frio with orders to their commanding officers to go home as best they could, or, if necessary to avoid capture, to beach their vessels. Captain Clark added, to reassure the Department as to his own safety and his opinion of his chances against Cervera's fleet if he should encounter them:

> The *Oregon* could steam 14 knots for hours and in a running fight might beat off and even cripple the Spanish fleet. With present amount of coal on board will be in good fighting trim, and could reach the West Indies. If more should be taken here I could reach Key West, but in that case, belt armor, cellulose belt, and protective deck should be below water-line. Whereabouts of Spanish fleet requested.

Secretary Long immediately responded: "Proceed at once to West Indies without further stop in Brazil. No authentic news of Spanish fleet. Avoid if possible. We believe that you will defeat it if met."

The Naval War Board at Washington fully discussed the advisability of despatching assistance to the *Oregon*

in view of the possibility of her being waylaid by Cervera's squadron, that had been last heard of at the Cape de Verde Islands. It was decided, however, that, under existing conditions, such a course was inadvisable and that it would be better to leave Captain Clark to pursue his own course, an eminently wise decision, as it proved.

The *Oregon* sailed from Bahia on the evening of the 9th of May, and, without further trouble anchored off Bridgetown, Barbadoes, May 18th, at 3.20 A.M., having made an average of 11.73 knots during her last run. As she had come from Brazil, the ship was quarantined and the Governor of the island sent Captain Clark a polite letter enclosing a copy of the Queen's proclamation, dated April 23, 1898. Having taken in four hundred tons of coal, the *Oregon* sailed from Barbadoes; and on May 24th, 1898, anchored off Jupiter Inlet, Fla., and, after communicating with the Department, was ordered to Key West, where she arrived May 26th.

The Secretary of the Navy telegraphed Captain Clark and his officers and crew the congratulations of the President and the Department upon their safe arrival and "the completion of your long and remarkably successful voyage." To this Captain Clark responded, on May 29th:

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the Department's telegram of yesterday, which was received and read to all hands at muster the same evening, causing great enthusiasm and spontaneous cheers. That the officers who have labored so faithfully and intelligently to bring the ship around in an efficient condition for fighting and steaming, and especially that the crew, who individually and collectively have made all sacrifices and who for two weeks have

asked for nothing but the privilege of doing extra work that might hasten the progress of the ship, should be mentioned and congratulated, affords me as the commanding officer especial gratification.

On May 26, 1898, Commodore George C. Remey, in command at Key West, received a letter from Rear-Admiral Sampson urging him to hasten the departure of the *Oregon*, which was to join the North Atlantic squadron. On May 28th, Sampson ran down to Key West and found the *Oregon* in the harbor outer entrance. At eight o'clock that morning, the Admiral received a telegram from the Navy Department announcing that it was the intention of the Government to make an immediate descent upon Cuba, landing about eight miles east of Santiago with ten thousand men, if Cervera's squadron proved to be in that port. Sampson was told to take the *New York*, *Indiana*, and *Oregon*, and as many smaller vessels with good batteries as could possibly be gathered to convoy the army transports and to guard against possible attack by Spanish torpedo-boat destroyers.

About midnight that day the following despatch was received from Secretary Long:

Schley telegraphs from Santiago de Cuba he goes to Key West with his squadron for coal, though he has 4000 tons of coal with him in a broken-down collier. How soon after arrival of Schley at Key West could you reach Santiago de Cuba with the *New York*, the *Oregon*, the *Indiana*, and some lighters . . . and how long could you blockade there, sending your vessels singly to coal from our colliers at Gonaives, Haiti Channel, Mole-Haiti, Nipe, Port Cuba, or elsewhere? There is one collier *en route* to Mole-Haiti from Norfolk and another one has been ordered there from Key

CAPTAIN CHARLES EDGAR CLARK, U.S.N.

West, and others will be sent immediately. Consider if you could seize Guantanamo and occupy as coaling station. Schley has not ascertained whether Spanish division is at Santiago. All information here seems to show that it is there.

At 3 A.M. the following day, May 29th, Sampson, in replying to the Secretary's question, said that he could reach Santiago in three days; he could blockade indefinitely; he thought he could occupy Guantanamo; and he would like to start for Santiago at once with the *New York* and *Oregon*, thus arriving at Santiago in two days. He added:

Do not quite understand as to the necessity of awaiting the arrival of Schley, but would propose meeting and turning back the principal part of the force under his command if he has left. Try to hold him by telegraph. Watson will be in charge here (at Key West) of everything afloat. Does the Department approve proposed action?

At noon on the twenty-ninth, Sampson further telegraphed the Department:

I urge immediate reply to my last paragraph. Failure of Schley to continue blockade must be remedied at once if possible. There can be no doubt of presence of Spanish squadron at Santiago.

That day Sampson received a telegram from Schley informing the Admiral that the *St. Paul* had captured a British collier bound in with coal, evidently for the Spanish fleet, as she had touched at San Juan and Curaçoa, and asking if he should endeavor to coal the *Marblehead* and the *Texas* in the open sea and retain position off Santiago until the coal supply of the larger vessels had given out.

Sampson at once replied, directing Schley to

Maintain close blockade at all hazards, especially at night, very little to fear from torpedo-destroyers. Coal in open sea whenever conditions permit. Send a ship to Guantanamo with view to occupying it as base, coaling one heavy ship at a time.

The afternoon of the twenty-ninth, a telegram from the Department gave Sampson all he desired—the liberty to act at discretion. It read:

You carry out recommendation to go yourself with two ships to Santiago de Cuba. Act at your discretion with the object of blockading Spanish division as soon as possible. Goodrich reports Guantanamo very weak. The seizure of it immediately is recommended.

At 11 P.M., on May 30th, Sampson, in the *New York*, with the *Oregon*, *Mayflower*, and *Porter*, left Key West for Santiago. At 6.55 A.M. on the thirty-first, he spoke Commodore Watson's flagship, the *Montgomery*, and, leaving him in command at Key West, he made signal to the other three ships to form column on the *New York*, and stood to the eastward at a speed of thirteen knots.

On June 1, 1898, Rear-Admiral Sampson arrived off Santiago in the *New York*, with the *Mayflower*, *Porter*, and the *Oregon;* and on the second the vessels of the fleet were arranged off the entrance to the port in a semicircle, the radius of the arc being six miles distant from the Morro by day and three to four miles at night. The *Oregon's* place in this circle was fifth from the eastern side, between the *New York* on the starboard hand and the *Iowa* on the port side.

On June 2d, the Admiral issued the following order:

The fleet off Santiago de Cuba will be organized during the operations against that port and the Spanish squadron

as follows: First squadron (under the personal command of the Commander-in-Chief), *New York*, *Iowa*, *Oregon*, *New Orleans*, *Mayflower*, *Porter*.

Second squadron (Commodore Schley), *Brooklyn*, *Massachusetts*, *Texas*, *Marblehead*, *Vixen*.

Vessels joining subsequently will be assigned by the Commander-in-Chief. The vessels will blockade Santiago de Cuba closely, keeping about six miles from the Morro in the daytime and closing in at night, the lighter vessels well in shore. The first squadron will blockade on the east side of the port, and the second squadron on the west side. If the enemy tries to escape, the ships must close and engage as soon as possible, and endeavor to sink his vessels or force them to run ashore in the channel. It is not considered that the shore batteries are of sufficient power to do any material injury to battle-ships.

In smooth weather the vessels will coal on station. If withdrawn to coal elsewhere, or for other duty, the blockading vessels on either side will cover the angle thus left vacant.

After it had been definitely ascertained that Admiral Cervera's fleet was in the harbor of Santiago, a plan, was suggested by Captain Chadwick of the *New York* looking to the obstruction of the narrow entrance to that harbor by sinking a collier or a vessel loaded with stone in the channel to ensure the detention of the Spanish ships where they were. This plan was considered by Sampson, and, meeting his approval, he sent instructions to Commodore Schley in regard to carrying it out. The story of Hobson's gallant deed is too familiar to need repetition here. As we know, he went in under the Morro with the *Merrimac* on the night of June 3d, sunk the ship somewhat too far to the north of the channel in consequence of the stern anchor chain breaking and allowing the ship to swing around, and

was taken off the next morning from the wreck, with his devoted crew, by Admiral Cervera in person, who courteously sent off in a flag-of-truce boat a letter from Hobson to Sampson, in which the Admiral was informed of the safety of the Americans.

On June 4th, Admiral Sampson directed the *Texas*, *Massachusetts*, *Iowa*, and *Oregon* to take positions four thousand yards from Estrella Point and opposite the entrance to the port in such position as to observe the wreck of the *Merrimac*, with orders to fire upon any parties that may be seen working about it. These ships kept their search-lights playing on the entrance to the harbor all night until daylight. The Admiral also organized a night picket-line of three steam launches, each armed with a 1-pounder and carrying signal lights. The duty of these boats was to cruise all night a mile off the Morro, keeping a sharp lookout for torpedo-boats. In continuance of these vigilant precautions against the egress of the enemy, he created, on June 7th, a second picket-line with the despatch-boats *Vixen*, *Suwanee*, and *Dolphin*, which formed a semicircle two miles from the Morro, between the steam launches and the main line of blockaders.

That the Spaniards should be prevented from increasing their harbor defences, Sampson began a series of bombardments of the Morro soon after his arrival. In these engagements the *Oregon* played an important part, running in within two hundred yards of the forts. In the attack on June 6th, the *Reina Mercedes*, which was lying nearest the entrance, although not in sight of the ships, was struck thirty-five times, one shell setting her on fire and causing the death of Commander Emilio De Acosta, Y. Eyerman, her second in command, with five seamen killed and twelve wounded. That

same night the *Marblehead* and *Yankee* ran down to Guantanamo and the next day took possession of the outer harbor, driving the Spanish gunboat *Sandoval* to the shallow waters of the inner harbor. On June 8th Commander McCalla landed a detachment of forty marines from the *New York*, forty from the *Oregon*, with twenty from the *Marblehead*, and this little force of one hundred men occupied the cable station from which the Spanish troops were driven, and held it until, on the tenth, the transport *Panther* arrived with a reinforcement of 647 marines, under Lieutenant-Colonel Robert W. Huntington, who landed and occupied the station, naming it Camp McCalla. During the next five days the marines had a number of sharp skirmishes with the Spaniards, inflicting severe loss upon the enemy, and finally, aided by the *Dolphin*, the Spanish force was driven out, possession of the bay was obtained, and direct telegraphic communication with the United States was established.

On June 10th, Lieutenant Victor Blue of the *Suwanee* made his famous reconnaissance of the bay to obtain the exact number of Cervera's ships. Passing through the Spanish lines with a Cuban guide, this officer gained a point three miles from the harbor, where, concealed in the underbush, he distinctly made out and counted Cervera's ships and mapped their location, regaining his own ship on June 13th. On June 25th, Lieutenant Blue repeated this feat, gaining additional valuable information.

On June 13th, the dynamite cruiser *Vesuvius* arrived, and on the night of the fourteenth she was sent in to within a mile of the Morro and discharged three shells, each containing two hundred pounds of guncotton. The explosion of these monster projectiles

was exceedingly demoralizing to the enemy, and great chasms were opened in the ground wherever they struck, but beyond the moral effect, they do not seem to have done very much permanent damage to the enemy. The *New Orleans* was sent in on the fifteenth and engaged the batteries for twenty minutes; and on the sixteenth a second general attack was made by the fleet on the harbor forts at a distance from fifteen hundred to three thousand yards. Many of the shells dropped close to the Spanish fleet and three men were killed and eighteen wounded in the forts, although no guns were dismounted.

On June 20th, the great fleet of thirty-seven transports, with sixteen thousand troops under command of Major-General William R. Shafter, arrived off Santiago, and after consultation it was decided to disembark the army at Daiquiri, with the view of occupying the forts at the entrance to Santiago harbor. This important operation was successfully completed within six days with the boats of the squadron, under cover of an attack by the ships upon the forts at Cabanas and the batteries at Aguadores, in which the *Oregon* took part, which was made as a diversion and to mislead the enemy as to where the landing was to be made.

Admiral Sampson was informed on June 30th, in a note from General Shafter, that he would attack Santiago on the following day, and the General asked Sampson to make a demonstration before the harbor and also bombard Aguadores preparatory to its attack by a brigade of infantry. This was the first intimation the Admiral received that the army had abandoned the original plan of attacking the Morro and the Socapo batteries by way of the beach, where he could have been covered by the fire of the fleet.

In compliance with this request, the *New York*, *Suwanee*, and *Gloucester* went in shore early on the morning of July 1st and opened a heavy fire on Aguadores, while a brigade of infantry under General Duffield came down by rail from Siboney and made a feint of attempting to cross the inlet, and then, after a loss of two killed and fifteen wounded, retired, much to the disappointment of the navy. On July 2d, our ships, at General Shafter's request, began another bombardment of the forts at 5.48 A.M., keeping up the fire until 7.45, and silencing the guns. In this brush two of the Spanish guns were dismounted, and one man was killed and thirty-two wounded.

That day Shafter wrote to Sampson:

> Terrible fight yesterday, but my line is now strongly entrenched about three quarters of a mile from town. I urge that you make effort immediately to force the entrance to avoid future losses among my men, which are already very heavy. You can now operate with less loss of life than I can.

The darkest day for our arms of the whole Cuban campaign was that Saturday, July 2d, when General Shafter telegraphed to Washington that he had Santiago well invested, but that his line was thin, the city was strongly defended and not to be taken without heavy loss, that he needed reinforcements (an echo of McClellan's persistent cry from the Army of the Potomac), and, worst of all, that he was considering the withdrawal of his force to the coast—in other words, a retreat.

A despatch from the Secretary of War was immediately sent to General Shafter to hold the San Juan heights, and the Quartermaster's Department at

Washington was urged to find transports to hurry out more troops.

On Sunday morning, July 3rd, while Washington was in a state of nervous excitement that recalled some of those dismal Sundays of the Civil War some forty years before, the navy was busily engaged in destroying Cervera's dreaded fleet and rescuing General Shafter from the unpleasant dilemma in which he had become involved.

On July 1st, Admiral Cervera received the following telegram from Captain-General Blanco:

> In conformity with the opinion of the Government, you will re-embark those of your crews which were landed, taking advantage of the first opportunity to go out of the harbor with all your ships.

After a council with his officers, in which they all agreed with the opinion of their Admiral, that it would be sure destruction to venture out with their ships in the face of such overwhelming odds, Cervera telegraphed Blanco that if the thousand sailors now in the works were re-embarked the city would surely be lost. In response, at one o'clock on the morning of July 2d Blanco telegraphed the imperative order: "Re-embark landed troops of squadron as fast as possible and go out immediately."

Cervera at once set at work embarking his men and getting his ships in readiness, and decided to run out at four o'clock that afternoon. Had he done so, the *Massachusetts*, the *New York*, and the *Suwanee* would then have been on their station instead of twelve miles away, and the tiresome Sampson-Schley controversy would probably have been avoided. But finding his men so exhausted by the severe work they were com-

pelled to perform in hurriedly getting their ships ready for sea, Cervera postponed his sortie and gave his men a greatly needed night's rest.

On Sunday, July 3, 1898, while the morning mist was still hanging about the Cuban hills, the *Massachusetts* and *Suwanee* left their station at four o'clock for Guantanamo, where they were to coal. The usual morning work went on on board the vessels of the fleet; the decks were washed, bright work polished, and the crews were piped to breakfast. At 8.50 o'clock, the flagship made the signal, "Disregard movements of Commander-in-Chief," and, in company with the *Ericsson*, the *New York* swung out of line and steamed toward Siboney, where the Admiral was to land and go inland several miles for a conference with General Shafter. At 9.31 A.M., while making ready for church service on board the ships, a gun from the *Iowa* startled the fleet and attracted attention to her signal, "Enemy's ships coming out!" Although the *Iowa*, having trouble with her boilers, had only steam enough to move her about five knots, Captain Evans, in obedience to Sampson's general order, headed his ship with a starboard helm at once for the *Infanta Maria Teresa*, the leading Spanish ship, and by 9.40, at a range of six thousand yards, he fired the first gun at the enemy.

The Spanish vessels, bright in their fresh paint and brilliant with battle flags, came out of the harbor at a speed of from eight to ten knots in the following order, and at a distance of about eight hundred yards apart: *Infanta Maria Teresa*, flagship; *Vizcaya; Cristobal Colon;* and the *Almirante Oquendo*. Following at a distance of about twelve hundred yards came the torpedo-boat destroyers *Pluton* and *Furor*. Each ship as she appeared opened a vigorous fire on the American

vessels, and thus came out past the Morro shrouded in the smoke from their own guns and leaving a long trail of black smoke in their rear. Turning to the westward as they cleared the channel, they increased their speed to the full power of their engines, and a race for life began, their rapid pace carrying them past the blockading vessels, with the exception of the *Brooklyn* and the *Texas*, that were at the western end of our line.

Captain Evans, of the *Iowa*, says, in *A Sailor's Log*, page 446:

> At this time the *Colon* came with a great show of speed, passing between the leading (Spanish) ships and the shore, and much protected by their smoke. As she passed, she struck me twice—two as beautiful shots as I ever saw made by any ship. . . . The first shell fired at us, through a rent in the smoke, struck on the starboard side a little forward of the bridge, about four feet above the water-line, passed through the cellulose belt, and exploded on the berth-deck, demolishing the dispensary, breaking almost every medicine bottle in it, and doing great damage otherwise. . . . The second shell, of the same size as the first—about 6½ inches in diameter—struck just at the water-line, and about six to ten feet farther forward, passed through the side and into the cellulose belt, where it broke up without exploding. It, however, made an ugly jagged hole eight inches long and eight inches wide, through which the water poured with great rapidity.

The *Oregon*, from her position nearly opposite the entrance of the harbor, about two miles from the shore, was for a time in the line of an almost continuous flight of projectiles that flew over the ship, although, fortunately, but three struck her. Chief Engineer Milligan, on the principle of being always ready, had kept up

sufficient steam to give his ship a speed of ten knots, while most of the other ships could start with only five or six knots. Captain Clark at once went ahead full speed to the westward, and, with a splendid burst of speed, passed all the ships of the fleet except the *Brooklyn*, at first keeping up a steady fire from the guns of the main battery, until, observing that the Spanish torpedo-boats were following, he brought his 6-inch and rapid-fire guns to bear upon them with telling effect.

As the *Oregon* ranged up near the *Maria Teresa*, now the sternmost of the Spanish ships and already on fire from the bursting shells of the *Indiana* and the *Iowa*, Captain Clark poured in a terrific raking fire, and the Spanish flagship turned and ran up on the rocks at Nina, her course ended, six and a half miles from the Morro. The *Oregon* then pushed on for the next Spanish ship, the *Almirante Oquendo*, delivering the fire of her starboard guns as they came in bearing upon the devoted ship. She, too, when the *Oregon* came fairly abeam of her, turned in to the beach a scant half-mile west of the Spanish flagship, at 10.20 A.M., ran her bow high up on the rocks and broke in two amidships.

The *Vizcaya* and *Cristobal Colon*, the last two remaining vessels of the enemy, were some distance ahead, but the *Oregon* had by this time worked her speed up to sixteen knots, and the *Vizcaya*, despairing of escape, riddled by the shot of the *Brooklyn* and *Oregon*, and on fire in a dozen places, was turned inshore at 11.15 to the beach at Assevaderas, fifteen miles from the Morro. Commodore Schley, in appreciation of her superb work, signalled, "*Oregon*, well done!"

But one of Cervera's proud fleet was now left, the *Cristobal Colon*, and for a time it seemed that she might

escape, but both the *Brooklyn* and *Oregon* were steadily gaining upon the chase. It was at this juncture that Chief Engineer Milligan went down himself to the stoke-hole to see what he could do to increase the *Oregon's* speed. After encouraging his fainting men by telling them how the battle was going, he came on deck and climbed up to the bridge, black with coal-dust, and begged Captain Clark to let his men hear a gun or two to "encourage them to live through the heat below and keep the old ship going." Then the terrible 13-inch guns of the *Oregon* spoke, and as their half-ton missiles fell over and ahead of the *Colon*, her Commander, Commodore José de Parades, hauled down his flag at one P.M., and edging his ship in to the shore beached her near the mouth of the Rio Tarquino, forty-eight miles from Santiago. Then the *Brooklyn* signalled the *Oregon*, "Cease firing," and immediately afterwards, "Congratulations for the grand victory; thanks for your splendid assistance."

Admiral Sampson soon after came up in the *New York*. The *Colon* was taken possession of by the *Brooklyn*, and a prize crew was put on board her from the *Oregon*, under Lieutenant-Commander J. K. Cogswell, executive officer. But the *Colon's* sea-valves had already been opened by the Spanish crew, and, notwithstanding all efforts to save her, she rapidly filled. To prevent the prize from sinking in deep water, Captain Chadwick ran the *New York* close up to her quarter and pushed her stern little by little in toward the beach. Then, taking a line from the bow of the *Colon* to the bow of the *New York*, he ran the Spanish ship well up the beach, where, three hours later, she rolled over on the shore in shallow water.

Although we have followed more particularly the

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NAVAL HEROES OF SANTIAGO

part taken by the *Oregon* in this glorious victory, the destruction of the Spanish ships, with the exception of the *Cristobal Colon*, was participated in by all the American vessels present. The *Colon*, however, was the especial prize of the *Oregon* and the *Brooklyn*, and she would in all probability have escaped, practically uninjured, had it not been for the superb burst of speed made by those two ships. The *Indiana*, the *Iowa*, and the *Texas* received the first brunt of the enemy's fire as the Spanish ships came out of the harbor; and the little *Gloucester*, as the special antagonist of the *Pluton* and *Furor*, was mainly responsible for their destruction, while her boats rescued the few survivors from those vessels, as well as many from the *Maria Teresa*, and received the surrender of Admiral Cervera after he abandoned his burning ship. As Commodore Schley well said, "There was glory enough for all."

The outcome of this amazing victory was the absolute annihilation of Cervera's fleet, with a loss to the Spaniards of 350 killed or drowned; 159, including 99 officers, wounded; and 1774 made prisoners. On our side none of our ships were seriously injured, and only one man, Chief Yeoman George H. Ellis, was killed, and one fireman (both in the *Brooklyn*) was wounded. The enormous disparity between the loss on the American and the Spanish side was even greater in this engagement than in Dewey's brilliant victory in Manila Bay.

With the total destruction of Cervera's dreaded fleet, the popular interest in the surrender of Santiago—which had now become a foregone conclusion—became languid. In comparison with the thrill of enthusiasm that swept over the United States when the news of the brilliant sea fight of the 3d of July was received, the

announcement of General Torral's capitulation on July 16th, and his final surrender on the seventeenth, was indeed tame. On the 12th of July, the *Massachusetts* and *Oregon* moved into position near the Morro and prepared to open upon the city with their 13-inch guns, and a truce was at once proposed by the Spaniards which ended five days later in a complete surrender, and Generals Shafter and Wheeler rode into Santiago at the head of their troops, and the American flag was hoisted on the City Hall, the band playing the *Star-Spangled Banner*, while the troops presented arms and salutes were fired by the artillery in the trenches.

On July 7, 1898, the *Oregon* was assigned to the Eastern squadron, under Commodore John C. Watson. This squadron was formed with the purpose of making a demonstration on the Spanish coast in the event of Admiral Camarra being sent with a fleet through the Suez Canal to the Philippines. It comprised, in addition to the *Oregon*, the *Massachusetts*, *Newark*, *New Orleans*, *Yankee*, *Yosemite*, *Dixie*, *Badger*, and several colliers and supply ships; but as Camarra returned from Suez to Spain with his ships, the squadron was never sent to Europe.

The *Oregon* was soon after ordered to the New York Navy Yard, and, on August 6, 1898, Captain Clark was detached and ordered to the Naval Hospital at Brooklyn, N. Y., and Captain A. S. Barker was again ordered to the command of his old ship. After refitting, she was ordered to join the Asiatic squadron, returning to the Pacific by the way of the Straits of Magellan and thence *via* Honolulu to Manila. On October 12, 1898, the *Oregon* sailed from New York for the Pacific Ocean *via* the Straits of Magellan, accompanied by the *Iowa*, the collier *Scindia*, and the distilling ship *Celtic*. The

vessels touched at Rio Janeiro, passed through the Straits and arrived at Callao on December 26th. At that port the American ships were received with special honors, and the *Oregon* and *Iowa* were presented with gold plates inscribed:

All honor to the Commander, the officers, and the crew of the U. S. S. *Oregon* (*Iowa*), victorious in the naval combat at Santiago de Cuba on the 3d day of July, 1898. This plate is given as a testimony of the patriotic gratitude of all Cuban citizens of Peru.

The *Oregon* touched at Honolulu and thence sailed, on February 20th, for Manila, where she arrived the last of March, 1899, making a welcome addition to Dewey's fleet.

June 17, 1900, the *Oregon*, Captain George F. F. Wilde, who had relieved Captain Barker, was ordered to the Peiho River, China; with the *Yorktown*, *Nashville*, and *Monocacy*, the situation being serious in consequence of the Imperial Chinese troops having fired on the allied fleet at the mouth of that river. While *en route* from Hong-Kong to Taku, in entering the Gulf of Pechuli, the *Oregon* grounded on Pinnacle Rock, in a dense fog, on June 29th. The ship's position was critical, as the rocks penetrated through her side and bottom, and great fears were entertained for her safety. Fortunately, she was floated on July 3d, and was taken to Nagasaki, Japan, where she was docked and repaired at the National dockyard at Kuve, in the Inland Sea, during July and August, returning to Woosung, China, September 10, 1900. The following year the *Oregon* returned to California, where she was very thoroughly overhauled and refitted at the Puget Sound Naval Station.

LAST WORDS

In following the progress of the American navy from its small beginnings in 1775 down to the present day, the student cannot fail to be impressed with the fact that our national ships have always represented the very highest standard of constructive skill and the latest development of scientific and mechanical invention.

The frigate *Constitution*, in 1797, was admittedly superior to any ship of her class afloat, both in design and in armament, and, after her merits had been demonstrated by her signal success in outsailing and outfighting several of the crack British ships, that government did not hesitate to model a large class of their heavy frigates upon the lines of the American vessel.

The *Fulton*, of our navy, was the first ship-of-war ever propelled by steam. The screw-propeller was first used during the Revolutionary War by David Bushnell, an ingenious American inventor, who applied it, worked by hand-power, to a submarine torpedo-boat with which he designed to blow up the *Eagle*, a British fifty-gun ship, in New York Harbor, in 1777, and he actually succeeded in blowing up a schooner astern of the British frigate *Cerberus* that was blockading the port of New London the same year. The *Princeton* was the first screw steam vessel of war ever built in any country, and the first war vessel in which all the machinery was placed below the water-line for protection from the enemy's shot.

As the *Constitution* and her sister ship, the *Constellation*, were in their day the finest specimens of the sailing frigate afloat, so, in 1856, the six first-class

screw-propeller frigates, the *Merrimac*, *Minnesota*, *Colorado*, *Niagara*, *Wabash*, and *Roanoke*, were superior to any vessels of war then found in the European navies; and the appearance of the *Monitor*, in 1862, effected a revolution in naval architecture all over the world.

The stalwart seventy-four and the saucy frigate of Isaac Hull's day are now as obsolete as the Phœnician war-galley, but neither armored battle-ships nor rifled guns would have gained us the brilliant victories at Manila Bay and Santiago de Cuba had we lacked the sturdy patriotism, indomitable energy, unfailing resource, and dashing bravery of the officers of our navy and of the men behind the guns.

Happily in them is still found—even as when Paul Jones hoisted the rattlesnake flag at the masthead of the *Alfred* a century and a quarter ago, and his gallant crew fought on the deck of the *Bon Homme Richard* until she sank beneath the waters of the English Channel in the hour of victory—the true strength of the Navy of the Republic.

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